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BIRDSONG AND THE ORIGINS OF MUSIC

SŁAWOMIRA ŻERAŃSKA-KOMINEK

INTRODUCTION

It is impossible to enumerate, let alone set in some sensible order, all the ideas and concepts that have taken shape in human minds over the centuries on the subject of the origins of music. Even Warren D. Allen, a highly competent and scrupulous student of European music historiography, had enormous difficulties in getting to grips with that extraordinary, heterogeneous tangle of intuitions, notions and conceptions. His *Philosophies of Music History*[1] first published in 1939, leaves no doubt that this is a problem that has unceasingly intrigued musicographers and scholars, firstly historians attempting to set music history in chronological order and later ethnomusicologists in the earliest, evolutionary past, seeking that which is eternally universal and fundamental in music.[2] The subject of this article is the oldest European 'theory' of *initio musices*, claiming that music derives from the singing of birds.

"DEMOCRITUS' HYPOTHESIS"

The idea of music as the imitation of birdsong was first formulated by Democritus of Abdera (460–370 BCE), who in an unidentified work uttered the following words:[3]

---

[1] Warren D. Allen, *Philosophies of Music History. A Study of General Histories of Music 1600–1960*, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1962.

[2] See *Die Probleme der vergleichenden Musikwissenschaft* [The Problems of Comparative Musicology], trans. Alexander Ringer, in Klaus P. Wachsman, Dieter Christensen and Hans-Peter Reinecke (eds.), *Hornbostel Opera Omnia*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1975, pp. 249–271.

[3] The utterances of Democritus are analysed by Andrzej M. Kempiński in *Demokryt, łabędź i słowik czyli o najstarszej wersji mimetycznej teorii genezy muzyki wokalnej* [Democritus, the Swan and the Nightingale, or On the Oldest Version of the Mimetic Theory of the Genesis of Vocal Music], in "Monochord. De musica acta, studia et commentarii", 3 (1994), pp. 7–15.

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> We are pupils of the animals in the most important things: the spider for spinning and mending, the swallow for building, and the songsters, swan and nightingale, for singing, by way of imitation[4].

A few hundred years later, the laughing philosopher's idea was recast in poetical form by Lucretius (99–55 BCE), in *De rerum natura*:

> And from the liquid warblings of the birds
> Learned they their first rude notes, ere music yet
> To the rapt ear had turned the measured verse[5].

'Democritus' hypothesis', better known in Lucretius' later version, was the object of lively debate in music historiography of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries[6], although it never became a dominant concept in reflection that was very strongly engaged on the side of faith and the truths written in the Scripture. A certain role was undoubtedly played here by the authority of the Roman poet and philosopher, although of greater importance may have been the fact that his views on the genesis of music, contained in that famous passage from *De rerum natura*, had no serious alternative in scholarship at that time, discounting, of course, conceptions derived from the Bible, which were beyond all discussion. Finally, also of not insubstantial significance was the quite widely perceived similarity between music and birdsong, which long constituted an argument in favour of a mimetic conception of its beginnings.

The year 1773 saw the publication of Daines Barrington's article 'Experiments and Observations on the Singing of Birds'[7], most probably one of the first attempts at a scholarly investigation into the link between birdsong and music. Barrington collected a substantial body of observations and arguments speaking in favour of the similarity between the musical behaviours of birds and people, emphasising, among other things, the capacity of these animals for assimilating melodic repertoires through learning. On the basis of his own research, he also concluded that music was certainly an imitation of the songs of birds, since the majority of musical compositions, in his opinion, employed the interval of a minor third, which can also be heard in the melodies of birds:

> Lucretius says (and perhaps the conjecture is not only ingenious but well founded), that the first musical notes were learned from birds: (...). Now, of all the musical tones which can be distinguished in birds, those of the cuckow

[4] Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. A Complete Translation of the Fragments in Diels, Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, B 154, p. 106.

[5] Titus Lucretius Carus, *On the Nature of Things*, trans. John Mason Good (verse), London, Henry G. Bohn, Book V, 1851, pp. 1417–1427.

[6] See Matthew Head, *Birdsong and the Origins of Music*, in "Journal of the Royal Musical Association", 122/1 (1997), pp. 1–23.

[7] *Philosophical Transactions* 1771/1774, vol. 63, pp. 249–291.

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> have been most attended to, which form a flat third, not only by the observations of the harpsichord tuner I have before mentioned, but likewise by those of Kircher, in his Musurgia. I know well that there have been some late compositions, which introduce the cuckow notes in a sharp third; these composers, however, did not trouble themselves with accuracy in imitating these notes, and it answered their purpose sufficiently, if there was a general resemblance. Another proof of our musical intervals being originally borrowed from the song of birds, arises from most compositions being in a flat third, where music is simple, and consists merely of melody. (...) The music of two centuries ago is likewise often in a flat third, though ninety-nine compositions out of a hundred are now in the sharp third[8].

The eminent English historian John Hawkins, also invoking Lucretius, as well as Athanasius Kircher, author of the first transcriptions of bird tunes[9], who contributed a great deal to music theory, stated that people imitated the sounds of nature and learned music from birds:

> The voices of animals, the whistling of the winds, the fall of waters, the concussion of bodies of various kinds, not to mention the melody of birds, as they contain in them the rudiments of harmony, may easily be supposed to have furnished the minds of intelligent creatures with such ideas of sound, as time, and the accumulated observation of succeeding ages, could not fail to improve into a system[10].

The opinions quoted here indicate that during the eighteenth century "Democritus" hypothesis' enjoyed the confidence of academic authorities, in both music history and biology, and observation-based attempts at defining analogies between birdsong and music were quite advanced. Songbirds (*Oscines*) produce an extremely rich array of sounds, including long vocalises, which may be called 'songs' and which are among the most beautiful and most complex sounds occurring in the natural world. It is most frequently the males that sing, and essentially only during the mating season, although this is by no means an absolute rule. For example, the females of the European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) sing in winter, and the females of many tropical species also sing[11]. The basic, although by no means the only, function of the song of males during the mating season is to communicate various emotional states and to attract females[12].

---

[8] *Ibidem*, pp. 269–270.

[9] Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis*, Rome, Corbelletti, 1650.

[10] John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 4 vols., London, T. Payne and Son, 1776, II, col. 2 (2nd edn in 2 vols., London, Novello & Co., 1875).

[11] Peter J.B. Slater, *Birdsong Repertoires*, in Nils L. Wallin, Björn Merker and Steven Brown (eds.), *The Origins of Music*, London, MIT Press, p. 50.

[12] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, London, John Murray, II, 1871, pp. 51–52.

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The musical behaviours of animals during the mating season, similarly to musical situations in many human societies, have a ritualised character, as is testified by their rhythmisation in annual, daily or seasonal cycles. Most birds sing only once a year, during the mating season[13]. Their repertoires sometimes consist of various works that are permanently linked to particular situations during the mating cycle. Thus there are songs performed before pairing[14], courting songs and songs sung after a pair has been formed[15]. A separate group of vocalises accompanies the activities preceding nesting, seeking a location and building a nest[16], and inviting a feathery spouse into the "marriage" nest. There are also melodies reserved exclusively for the period of hatching and rearing the young and performed at the moment when they leave their parents. When the female wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) leads her young out of the nest, she sometimes performs a sort of farewell song. In some species of bird, it occurs that the male, moved by the moment of separation, expresses himself in song[17]. The singing of animals that is connected with the mating cycle is very often synchronised with body movements, posture and the display of colours or bodily parts. All of these visual and kinetic means of reinforcing the song resemble human ritual dancing, in which painted or colourfully dressed dancers accompany singing with dance figures[18].

The cycle of the seasons and the migration of birds is often marked by special melodies. Depending, of course, on the species, these include songs of winter, spring and autumn, and also 'farewell' songs, sung before migration[19]. In Hungary, starlings have been observed which, before flying off, return to their nesting place and perform a short song of farewell. As for the daily cycle of song, this is strongly dependent, among many species of bird, on the intensity of light in a given environment[20].

Birds' musical repertoire is not given from birth, but develops during their 'childhood' and 'youth'. The forming of musical skills is both conditioned by genetic programming and dependent on education, a fundamental part of which is young individuals' listening to the songs of adults[21]. Learning links songbirds and

[13] Edward A. Armstrong, *A Study of Bird Song*, Oxford University Press, 1963; D.E. Kroodsma and E.H. Miller, *Ecology and Evolution of Acoustic Communication in Birds*, Ithaca and London, Comstock/Cornell University Press, 1996.

[14] Peter J. B. Slater, *Birdsong Repertoires*, in *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[15] William A. Searcy and K. Yasukawa, *Song and Female Choice*, in D.E. Kroodsma and E.H. Miller (eds.), *Ecology and Evolution of Acoustic Communication in Birds*, Ithaca and London, Comstock/Cornell University Press, 1996, pp. 454–474.

[16] Peter J.B. Slater, *Birdsong Repertoires*, in *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[17] Edward A. Armstrong, *A Study of Bird Song*, in *op. cit.*, pp. 149–170.

[18] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, in *op. cit.*, II, pp. 68–71.

[19] Edward A. Armstrong, *A Study of Bird Song*, in *op. cit.*, pp. 171–173.

[20] Alex Kacelnik and J. H. Krebs, The Dawn Chorus in the Great Tit (Parus major): Proximate and Ultimate Causes, in "Behavior" 83 (1983), pp. 287–309.

[21] C.K. Catchpole and Peter J.B. Slater, *Bird Song. Biological Themes and Variations*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 45.

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people, as was noted by Barrington and confirmed a century later by Charles Darwin:

> Singing is to a certain extent, as shewn in a previous chapter, an art, and is much improved by practice. Birds can be taught various tunes, and even the unmelodious sparrow has learnt to sing like a linnet[22].

Even closely related songbirds possess repertoires that differ quite considerably in size. For example, the redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), of the Turdidae family, has only a single type of song at its disposal, whereas the song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) has over 200 songs in its repertoire. Yet some birds build up a quasi-rich repertoire from barely a handful of elements arranged in the most diverse ways. Some scholars consider, for instance, that the male sedge warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) never repeats the same song twice throughout its entire life. By means of a great variety of juxtapositions of different elements (about fifty different types) in very long songs, this bird creates the 'illusion' of a rich repertoire. Small repertoires (two or three songs) are possessed, for example, by the chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) and the grace's warbler (*Dendroica graciae*), and a large repertoire by the common nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), which knows over 200 songs, performing them in groups or bundles, which resembles the principle of cyclicity. Also widely known for their long and complicated songs are starlings. The size of their repertoires varies between 21 and 67 types of song[23].

Birds of many species sing in chorus, as, for example, the Australian magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*), confined to Australasia. However, the relations between the notes of individual birds within a chorus are not clearly defined, as in the bird choruses which we often hear at dawn. Many different birds sing together without forming a deliberate, organised whole. A separate case is that of duets, usually formed by tropical birds, which live for a long time in monogamous "nuptial" bonds[24]. The performers maintain social contact with each other and coordinate their song very precisely, either in unison or antiphonally, presenting something like a "conversation". Bird duets also fulfil the function of duels in defence of territory. If individuals engaged in battle possess repertoires with different phrase lengths, then each bird will try to match the other[25].

One can point to many common structural features between birdsong and music. The sound material of songbirds is a combination of discrete elements known as "syllables"[26]. The basic units of composition are songs, although these are not connected in more highly organised wholes, but form sequences of single

---

[22] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, in *op. cit.*, II, p. 55.

[23] Peter J.B. Slater, *Birdsong Repertoires*, in *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[24] Edward A. Armstrong, *A Study of Bird Song*, in *op. cit.*, p. 180.

[25] *Ibidem*, p. 114.

[26] Peter R. Marler, *Birdsong and Speech Development: Could there be Parallels?*, in "American Scientist", 58 (1970), pp. 669–673.

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songs. Each song has a beginning and an end and is separated from its neighbours by pauses of varying duration. Over the course of a single performance, songs may undergo variational modification. In some bird species, certain elements of a tonal system have been shown to function. Research into the songs of the swamp sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*) has shown that individual notes of the songs they perform invariably appear at either the beginning or the end of a melody, thus fulfilling the role of a sort of "tonic". The use of the same notes or motifs at the beginning and the end of a song constitutes a close analogy with music, in which the tonic invariably appears in the initial or final position in a melody[27]. Birdsong may also display varying emotional intensity, dependent on changes in the tempo of a rendition, loudness and register. The impression of similarity to music is enhanced by the melodic richness of birdsongs, which are not monotonous, displaying a varied compass, melodic contour, tempo, rhythm and dynamics. Charles Darwin even suggested that birds possess an aesthetic sense, deriving pleasure from singing, which brings their vocal behaviours even closer to the musical behaviours of man[28].

Thus there exist between birdsong and music so many analogies, real and apparent, that their connection in the evolutionary history of man would seem almost certain. In spite of this, however, there has been no lack among musicographers and philosophers of sceptics who, from various epistemological positions, have expressed doubts about the actual similarity between birdsong and music, and consequently about the mimetic conception of the beginnings of music. The first was St Augustine, who in his treatise *De Musica*, comparing birdsong and the singing of man, demonstrated their fundamental distinction. The songs of birds are not music because the defining constituent of the notion of "music" is knowledge produced by man's mind, an awareness of rules, which birds, guided by instinct alone, do not possess:

> M. Tell me, then, whether the nightingale seems to mensurate its voice well in the spring of the year. For its song is both harmonious, and sweet and, unless I'm mistaken, it fits the season.
>
> D. It seems quite so.
>
> (6) [...] Those who play on flutes or lyres or any other instrument of this kind, they can't be compared to the nightingale, can they?
>
> D. No.
>
> M. How, then, do they differ?

[27] Peter R. Marler and R. Pickert, *Species-Universal Microstructure in the Learned Song of the Swamp Sparrow (Melospiza Georgiana)*, in "Animal Behaviour" 32, pp. 673–689.

[28] Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, 6th edn, London, John Murray, 1872, pp. 161–162.

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D. In that I find a certain art in these instrument players, but only nature in nightingale. [...]

M. But don't you think art is a sort of reason, and those who use art use reason? Or do you think otherwise?

D. It seems so.

M. Therefore, whoever cannot use reason does not use art[29].

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the discussion on the origins of music became a rather complicated, philosophical-theoretical discourse on the essence of music, in its simplest, most authentic manifestations[30]. Arguments began to be put forward against the imitational conception, heralding a new approach to the problem of origins. Christian Schubart, for example, stated that man does not need to imitate animals, as he possesses innate musical abilities:

> The art of music is as old as the world itself. According to Aristotle, man may be called both a singing and a speaking creature. Everyone is born with a predisposition for singing... The idea of some ancient authors, that music was the art of imitation, is therefore completely childish and contrary to man's nature. The eternal invariability of birdsong is so tiresome that people could only by chance have imitated it occasionally for amusement[31].

Laborde, in turn, was of the opinion that the songs of birds could not constitute a model for music, since the intervals they contain were in fact entirely incomprehensible to humans:

> As for its origins, it is an extravagant opinion, that of Caméléon Pontique, to seek to attribute it to the singing of birds. There is no doubt that birdsong is pleasing to the ear: it is even sufficiently varied to bring pleasure to the senses; but not to the human mind, which is unable to assess the majority of the intervals formed by birdsong in theory or in practice[32].

In Enlightenment learning, the "hypothesis of Democritus/Lucretius" represented, on the one hand, a weighty counter-proposition to the creationist

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[29] Saint Augustine, *On music*, in vol. 2 of *Writings of Saint Augustine*, transl. Robert Catesby Taliaferro, New York, Cima Publishing Co., Inc., 1947, pp. 176-178.

[30] Alexander Rehding, *The Quest for the Origins of Music in Germany Circa 1900*, in "Journal of the American Musicological Society", 53/2 (2000), pp. 345–379.

[31] Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Asthetik der Tonkunst*, Vienna, 1806; repr. Leipzig, 1977, p. 35.

[32] 'A l'égard de son origine, c'est une opinion extravagante que celle de Caméléon Pontique, de vouloir l'attribuer au chant des oiseaux. Le chant plaît sans doute à l'oreille: il est même assez varié pour faire plaisir aux sens; mais sans en faire à l'intelligence humaine, que ne peut porter aucun jugement, ni par théorie, ni par pratique, sur la plus grande partie des intervalles formées par le chant des oiseaux.' – cf. J.B. de Laborde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne*, Paris, Pierres, 1780, I, ch. 4, p. 8.

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concept of the origins of music and, on the other, an archaic semblance of scientific theory. Let us add that the rationalistic and literal reading of ancient thinking gave not the slightest hope of a profound understanding and interpretation of this thinking in keeping with the spirit of the two philosophers' knowledge and imagination.

The idea that people were taught music by birds was ultimately abandoned by comparative musicology. One of its chief proponents, Curt Sachs, wrote in *Our Musical Heritage*, from 1948:

> Mythology is wrong. (...) And wrong, so far, are the many theories presented on a more or less scientific basis – the theories that man has imitated the warbling of birds, that he wanted to please the opposite sex, that his singing derived from drawn-out signaling shouts, that he arrived at music via some coordinated, rhythmical teamwork, and other speculative hypotheses. Were they true, some of the most primitive survivors of early mankind would have preserved a warbling style of song, or love songs, or signal-like melodies, or rhythmical worksongs, which they hardly have[33].

Referring to a comparative musicology centred around research into 'our living ancestors', Sachs rejected all previous theories of the beginnings of music, including the mimetic conception. The positivistic and scientistic methodological paradigm of early ethnomusicology was wholly unfavourable to reflection on the actual meaning of the ancient conception of the origins of music, the source of which may have sprung from the metaphoric-symbolic interpretations of nature – and of avifauna in particular – that were characteristic of many cultures.

BIRDS AS PEOPLE AND PEOPLE AS BIRDS

In many archaic cultures, birds were the subject of complex interpretations and symbolisations. The ability to fly, colours, sensitivity to light, collaboration, family life and communication through sound distinguished the world of birds quite markedly among all the animals living in man's environment:

> [Birds] are further removed from dogs than men in their anatomical structure, their physical structure and their mode of life [...] they can be permitted to resemble men for the very reason that they are so different. They are feathered, winged, oviparous and they are also physically separated from human society by the element in which it is their privilege to move. As a result of this fact, they form a community which is independent of our own but, precisely because of this independence, appears to us like another society, homologous to that in which we live: birds love freedom; they build themselves homes in which they live a family life and nurture their young; they often engage in social relations with other members of their species; and

[33] Curt Sachs, *Our Musical Heritage*, New York, Prentice Hall, 1948.

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they communicate with them by acoustic means recalling articulated language. Consequently everything objective conspires us to think of the bird world as a metaphorical human society: is it not after all literally parallel to it on another level?[34].

One of the best studied examples of the metaphoric link between people and birds is the "bird culture" of the Kaluli people of Papua New Guinea, described by Steven Feld.[35] Their attitude to birds is a complex construction built on the conviction that the human world is reflected in the ecology and the natural order of the forest. The Kaluli also have various ways of analogising birds and people at their disposal. The simplest of these is lexical substitution, whereby humans are given the name of a bird, which refers to their natural characteristics, such as voice type, demeanour or colour. Additionally, the name corresponds to a person's spiritual form, indicating his avian, that is, incorporeal, form of being. In identifying the similarities between people and birds, the Kaluli not only constitute a cultural place for giving people the names of birds, but also delineate a domain of spirituality that is coherent with that of birds. The worldview basis for these practices is the conviction that behind the normally perceived reality lies the unseen reality of another world. Thus everything has a dual nature: seen and unseen. People who have departed the seen world pass into 'that' world; they become spirits, which are represented here on earth by birds. Thus birds are the intermediaries between worlds; as physical beings they belong to both natural and spiritual reality, representing the 'reflection of Kaluli' who departed in the moment of death and return "in the form of birds". The voices of birds are both the sounds of their existence in the natural world and the voices of spirits from the other world, which communicate their feelings to the living.

The belief that death changes man into bird and the representation of the soul as a bird is documented in many mythological and folk cultures. On prehistoric relics in Europe and Asia, the Cosmic Tree is depicted with two birds on its branches, most probably symbolising a Soul-Ancestor[36]. In mythologies of Central Asia, Siberia and Indonesia, birds sitting on the branches of the Tree of the World represent human souls[37]. The Ancient Chinese believed in the existence of two human souls, one of which was conceived of as a bird. Steles of the T'u-küe contain representations of birds, and a standard expression on their epitaphs is "to fly away" and "to become a gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*)", in the sense of

[34] Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, trans. Doreen Weightman, University of Chicago Press, 1966, p. 204.

[35] Steven Feld, *Sound and Sentiment. Birds, Weeping, Poetics and Song in Kaluli Expression*, 2nd ed., University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.

[36] Mircea Eliade, *Szamanizm i archaiczne techniki ekstazy*, trans. and introd. Krzysztof Kocjan, ed. Jerzy Tulisow, Warsaw, PWN, 1994, p. 474. [Fr. orig. *Le chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase*, Paris, Payot, 1951].

[37] *Ibidem*

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"to die"[38]. The early Turks also believed that after death the human soul flew off in the form of a bird, e.g. a falcon or eagle[39], which the Yakuts and Buryats regarded as the first shaman and called 'ruler'[40]. In ancient Egypt, man comprised various spiritual elements, which included *ba*, conceived of in the form of a bird, most frequently a falcon with a human head and sometimes also arms. *Ba* was one of the most volatile elements of personality, manifesting itself primarily after death, although we learn from some texts devoted to dreams that also during sleep *ba* could free itself and travel around the world[41]. After death, *ba* left the grave and travelled to heaven, where it fed on sacrifices and talked with other spirits[42]. In ancient Egypt, the spirit of the deceased was symbolised by the swallow[43] and the phoenix, which will be discussed further into this article.

In the Sumerian Gilgamesh, Enkidu dreamt that the terrible Anzu bird changed him into a dove and took him off to the world of the dead, in which all the spirits had robes made of feathers:

Listen, my friend, I saw a dream this night.
The heavens cried out, the earth replied.
I stood between them.
There was a man there, dark was his countenance –
Similar to the Anzu (bird) was his countenance.
A lion's claws were his claws, an eagle's talons were his talons.
He caught me by my crop of hair and tormented me.
(...)
[He struck] and changed me into a dove,
[he...] my shoulders like those (of) a bird.
He took me and led me away to a house of darkness, the abode of Irkalla,
to a house whose dwellers crave light,
where their food was dust, clay their nourishment,
where they are dressed as birds in robes of feathers
and see not the light, but sit in darkness[44].

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[38] Edward Tryjarski, *Zwyczaje pogrzebowe ludów tureckich na tle ich wierzeń* [The funeral practices of Turkic peoples in the context of their beliefs], Warsaw, PWN, 1991, p. 33.

[39] *Ibidem*, p. 306.

[40] T. M. Mikhailov, *Iz istorii buryatskogo shamanizma* [From the history of Buryat shamanism], Nowosibirsk, Nauka, 1980, p. 158.

[41] Kathi Meyer-Baer, *Music of the Spheres and the Dance of Death. Studies in Musical Iconology*, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 228.

[42] Andrzej Niwiński, *Mity i symbole starożytnego Egiptu* [The myths and symbols of ancient Egypt], Warsaw, Pro-Egipt, 1992, p. 222.

[43] Manfred Lurker, *Bogowie i symbole starożytnych Egipcjan*, trans. Adam Łukasiewicz, Warsaw, Czytelnik, 1995, p. 105. [Eng. orig. *Gods and Symbols of Ancient Egypt*, London, Thames & Hudson, 1980].

[44] Krystyna Łyczkowska, Piotr Puchta and Magdalena Kapełuś, *Epos o Gilgameszu*, tabl. VII, col. 4, Warsaw:, Agade, 2002, p. 34.

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Greek mythology is filled with tales of humans changed into birds. Among the most familiar are the Sirens, half woman, half bird, the first mention of which appears in the *Odyssey*. According to Ovid, the Sirens were once ordinary girls, companions of Persephone. When she was abducted by Pluto, they received wings from the gods, that they might seek companions both at sea and on land:

> O Siren Maids, but wherefore thus have ye the feet and plumes of birds, although remain your virgin features? Is it from the day when Proserpina gathered vernal flowers; because ye mingled with her chosen friends? And after she was lost, in vain ye sought through all the world; and wished for wings to waft you over the great deep, that soon the sea might feel your great concern.—The Gods were kind: ye saw your limbs grow yellow, with a growth of sudden-sprouting feathers; but because your melodies that gently charm the ear, besides the glory of your speech, might lose the blessing, of a tongue, your virgin face and human voice remained[45].

Also winged spirits of the dead were the Keras, which were regarded as Fates coexisting with each human being, personifying not only the kind of death, but also the kind of life that a person should choose. In the *Iliad*, in scenes of battle and rape, they represent Destiny, which befalls a hero in the moment of death. Other winged spirits of the dead were the Erinyes, fearsome goddesses which inhabited the Underworld, and Harpies, winged women or birds with a human head and sharp talons, which carried off children and souls. Harpies were sometimes depicted on gravestones, lifting the soul of the deceased up in their talons. Virgil placed them in the vestibule of hell, alongside other monsters. Changed into birds were the Stymphalides, daughters of Stymphalus and Ornis, which were killed by Heracles for refusing him hospitality. The Stymphalian Birds inhabited a great forest on Lake Stymphalus in Arcadia, whither they fled from a plague of wolves. They multiplied so greatly that they became a bane for the surrounding area.

Also familiar in Greek tradition is the dramatic and bloody tale of Aedon,[46] who won a contest with her husband Polytechnus. The vanquished spouse avenged himself by raping his wife's sister, Chelidon (Swallow), whom he also made Aedon's slave. But the sisters recognised one another and repaid Polytechnus by giving him the body of Itylus, his only son, to eat. The gods turned all the protagonists of this tale into birds: Pandareos, Aedon's father, became an eagle, Harmotoe, her mother, a kingfisher, Polytechnus a green woodpecker, Aedon's brother became a hoopoe, her sister Chelidon a swallow, and Aedon herself a nightingale, to which we shall return further into this article.

According to Ovid, the Hyperboreans were deceased who had wings:

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[45] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Brookes More, Boston, Cornhill, 1922, V, pp. 560–568.

[46] Pierre Grimal, Aedon, in *Słownik mitologii greckiej i rzymskiej*, Wroclaw, Ossolineum, 1987, pp. 7–8. [Fr. orig. *Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine*, PUF, 1951.]

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> 'Tis said that Hyperboreans of Pallene can cover all their bodies with light plumes by plunging nine times in Minerva's marsh [i.e. a lake of bitumen]. But I cannot believe another tale: that Scythian women get a like result by having poison sprinkled on their limbs[47].

There are also numerous examples of the metaphoric and symbolic link between human spirituality, or more specifically the soul, and birds in Christian tradition. The *Physiologus* describes the charadrius bird, which appears by the bed of an ill person, and, gazing at him/her, predicts death or recovery. If the person was to return to health, it would extract the illness and fly off towards the sun; when it returned, the patient would die. According to some scholars, the charadrius, which symbolised the Resurrection of Christ, might have been a relic of an ancient conception of the soul-bird[48]:

> It is well to compare all of this to the figure of the Saviour, as our Lord is immaculately white and has no dark blemishes. For He said: 'The ruler of this world will come and will find in me nothing'. The Lord, having come to us pagans, took our weaknesses and bore our illnesses. He was raised on a cross and erased all our weaknesses and sins. He went up on high, taking his prisoners with him[49].

A dove was the visible form of the soul leaving the body of St Scholastica and St Teresa of Ávila at the moment of their death[50].

AVIAN LAMENT

In many myths and legends, the passage to the other world, or becoming a bird, is marked by a dolorous bewailment or sung lament. In the Kaluli culture, birds constitute a metaphorical correlate of people, above all people who have already departed this world and communicate with the living via the intermediary of birds' voices. A key role in this emotional communication is played by birds of the Columbiformes order (genus *Ptilinopus*), the sounds of which are associated by the Kaluli with death, departure and sadness. The high, falsetto and falling sound of these birds is also compared by the Kaluli to the cry of a child, especially a hungry, crying child. The most important bird in this group is the *muni* (beautiful fruit dove), the calls of which comprise two "phrases": the first very high, consisting of

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[47] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV, pp. 364–368.

[48] Kathi Meyer-Baer, *Music of the Spheres and the Dance of Death. Studies in Musical Iconology*, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 284.

[49] *Physiologus*, O ptaku charadriosie, trans. Katarzyna Jażdżewska, Biblioteka Antyczna, Warsaw, 2003, p. 25.

[50] Dorothea Forstner OSB, *Świat symboliki chrześcijańskiej*, trans. and ed. Wanda Zakrzewska, Paweł Pachciarek and Ryszard Turzyński, Warsaw, Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1990, p. 232. [Ger. orig. *Die Welt der christlichen Symbole*, Innsbruck, Tyrolia, 1966.]

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quick sounds of indeterminate pitch, the second, based on several falling notes of definite pitch, more melodious and emitted more slowly. The calls of the *muni* bird are also a symbolic expression of death and a sonic metaphor of an abandoned, hungry and lonely child. These meanings are referred to by the tale of a boy who became a *muni* bird:

> Once there was a boy and his elder sister. One day they went off to a small stream to catch crabs. The boy failed to catch a single one; the girl caught many, but did not want to share them with her brother. The boy felt greatly saddened and at that moment he caught a little shrimp. He observed it closely. He spread his palm, which became all red. He gouged the flesh from the shell and put it to his nose. His nose grew bright red. he looked at his hands: they had changed into wings. When his elder sister turned around and saw that her brother was a bird, she was greatly distressed. O, *ade*, do not fly away. He opened his mouth to reply, but uttered no words, only gave out the high shrill wail of the *muni* bird, the dove. He began to fly off, still repeating the *muni*'s wail, a falling *eeeeeeeee*... Seeing him, his sister cried bitterly and called out: oh *ade* come back, take the crabs, eat them all. But in vain. The boy was now a *muni* bird and still wailing and wailing. His wail grew ever slower and more measured, until it turned into a sung lament[51].

The myth of the boy who became a *muni* bird opens up the most apt perspective for the interpretation of "Democritus' hypothesis", since it shows the mechanism of the metaphorisation of bird calls and their suffusion with cultural meaning. The accumulating semantic connections between the particular motifs of the myth create a structure explaining the genetic parallels between birdcalls and the music of the Kaluli. So above all myth places an equals sign between (social) abandonment, isolation, and death, or becoming a bird. In connecting the state of being a bird, that is, of being dead, abandoned and lonely with the sounds of lament, the myth also establishes a cultural equivalence between sound and emotion. The three- or four-note melody of the *muni* becomes a sonic metaphor for the feeling of sadness at loss and isolation. Thus becoming a bird points, on the one hand, to death and to the spiritual form of the deceased and, on the other, to the aesthetic codes which are the means of expressing sadness and grief and which are culturally activated by the transformation of an avian lament into the real lament of the people of a Kaluli tribe for someone who has died. The sequence of sounds emitted by the *muni* constitutes the structural axis of the laments performed by men and women of the Kaluli people. In other words, the calls of the *muni* become part of a real lament, on the strength of the metaphoric link between the four notes emitted by the bird and the feelings of sadness and grief. In the Kaluli culture, both men and women lament, although only women's laments are transformed into a

[51] Steven Feld, *Sound and Sentiment*, in *op. cit.*, pp. 20–22.

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song/weeping lamenting the deceased. The melodic contour of these songs encompasses the three or four sounds of a symbolic *muni* cry, whilst the improvised text contains the singers' personal memories of the deceased.

Through the intermediary of the funeral lament, the calls of the *muni* bird become the building material for singing/weeping and for the Gisalo song, which forms the core of the Kaluli's musical-ritual repertoire. The Gisalo, identical with the lament and with the four-note call of the *muni*, is suffused with deep sorrow and, performed during ceremonies, it moves others to tears. But attaining the desired aesthetic and emotional effect requires a rendition of the song that is full of drama, with expressive dancing and costume, which transform the performer of the Gisalo into a bird[52]. A man as sad as the bird transforms weeping and poetry into song.

The Kaluli's expressive forms of music arise as an imitation of the cry of the *muni* bird, but their meaning in lament, poetry and song is constituted on the strength of the link between the perception of birds' behaviour in the forest, their classification and the symbolic meaning ascribed to them. The axis of this construct is the bird (birds) perceived as the symbol of the human soul or spirit and the conception of death understood as a change into a bird. When dying, a man becomes a bird, the voice of which symbolises the bewailing of death on the path to the other world. It is worth noting here that the doves which play such an important role in Kaluli culture are not songbirds at all, emitting the cry from which the Kaluli believe their music originates.

In the culture of ancient Greece, a meaning similar to the cry of the *muni* dove in the culture of the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea was possessed by the song of the nightingale. Aedon (Gr. for nightingale), changed into a nightingale, who by mistake or out of revenge[53] killed her own son, Itylus, laments the loss of her child with song:

> As the dun nightingale, daughter of Pandareus, sings in the early spring from her seat in shadiest covert hid, and with many a plaintive trill pours out the tale how by mishap she killed her own child Itylus, son of king Zethus, even so does my mind toss and turn...[54]

The dolorous song of the nightingale was also mentioned by Plato in *Phaedo*, confirming the popularity of the connection between the nightingale and death among the Greeks:

> ... no bird sings when cold, or hungry, or in pain, not even the nightingale, nor the swallow, nor yet the hoopoe; which are said indeed to tune a lay of sorrow...[55]

The age-old link between a bird "singing at dusk" (lit. *luscinia*) and death was not forgotten in the poetry of the troubadours and trouvères. In works by

[52] *Ibidem*, p. 37.
[53] See Pierre Grimal, *Słownik mitologii greckiej i rzymskiej*, in *op. cit.*
[54] Homer, *The Odyssey* XIX, 85, trans. George Kerr, 2nd edn., London, Frederic Warne, 1958.
[55] Plato, *Phaedo*, trans. Reginald Hackforth (Forgotten Books, 1959), XXXV, 85 A.

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Marcabru (*c.*1129–50), Arnaut de Mareuil (*c.*1170–1200), Jaufre Rudel (1120–47), Giraut Giraut de Bornelh (1140–*c.*1200) and Bernard de Ventadorn (1120–47), the nightingale is the embodiment of *joie*, a sign of True Love. According to the esoteric aesthetic of *fin'amor*, the poet's song is inspired by love, and the dying nightingale symbolises happiness at one's own death of, or for, love. The song *Li roucignous chante tant*, by Thibaut de Champagne (1202–1253), tells of a nightingale which dies deeply troubled by its song[56]. In his treatise *Ars musica* (*c.*1270), the Spanish Franciscan Johannes Aegidius of Zamora quotes a lengthy passage from Pliny's *Natural History*, into which he inserts his own piece about the death of a singing bird:

> The nightingale wastes little time in eating so that she can enjoy the beauty of her own song. Thus she dies sometimes from singing, and in dying sings[57].

We find a similar description in the *Bestiary of love* by Richard de Fournival, who, like Thibaut de Champagne, identifies the poet with a nightingale, and his song with dying:

> Such is its nature that the poor creature so neglects to eat and search for food and it so delights in singing that it dies in song. And it took heed of that because singing has served me so little that to trust myself to song might mean even my self-destruction and song would never rescue me; more particularly, I discovered that at the hour when I sang my best and executed my best lyrics, things were at their worst for me, as with the swan[58].

Referring to the swan in the context of a death-song, Richard alludes to the Greek mythological tradition, which features five heroes changed into swans and bearing the name Kyknos (lit. swan). The earliest hero of this name was the son of Poseidon and Kalyke, allied with Priam during the Trojan wars. His body was immortal, and in order to defeat him Achilles had to strike him on the face and push him with blows of his shield. Moving back, Kyknos fell down and Achilles then strangled him. Poseidon changed his son into a swan. Another Kyknos was King of Ligurgia and a friend of Phaeton, son of the Sun; when Zeus struck Phaeton with lightning, Kyknos so despairingly lamented the loss of his friend that

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[56] Li roucignous chante tant
Qu'il chiet mors del arbre jus;
Si bel mort ne vit nus, [-1]
Si dous ne si plaisant. [-1]
Autreci muir en chantant a haus criz,
Et si ne puis de ma dame estre oïz,
N'ele de moi pitié avoir ne daigne – cit. after A.Wallensköld, *Les chansons de Thibaut de Champagne, roi de Navarre*, Paris, E. Champignon, 1925.

[57] Johannes Aegidius de Zamora, *Ars musica* – cit. after Elizabeth Eva Leach, *Sung Birds. Music, Nature, and Poetry in the Later Middle Ages*, Cornel University Press, 2007, p. 73.

[58] Richard de Fournival, *Master Richard's Bestiary of Love and Response*. trans. Jeanette Beer, University of California Press, 1986, pp. 4–5.

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after his death he was changed into a swan, which Apollo[59] gifted with a beautiful voice[60]. According to another version, Kyknos, king of the Ligyes, who lived beyond the Eridanus, sang so beautifully that on his death Apollo changed him into a swan. Yet another Kyknos, the son of Ares, was a highway robber, and he raised a temple to Apollo from the skulls of murdered travellers. This was not greatly appreciated by the god of war, who brought about a battle between Kyknos and Heracles, who defeated him; his father then changed him into a swan.

Perhaps the oldest iconographic record of the swan's association with song is the megaron fresco at Pylos (1400–1200 BCE), depicting a man playing on a five-string lyre (*phorminx*), the frame of which is formed by the neck and head of a swan. It is possible that the motif of death is also represented on this fresco by a large white bird in flight, placed near the playing singer. The legend of the death-song of Apollo's birds is confirmed by Plato in *Phaedo*, where he places the following words on Socrates' lips:

> For they [swans], when they perceive that they must die, having sung all their life long, do then sing more than ever, rejoicing that they are about to go away to the god whose ministers they are. But men, because they are themselves afraid of death, slanderously affirm of the swans that they sing a lament at the last [...][61].

The myth of a bird singing before its death was also familiar in Arabic and Jewish literature,[62] but above all in Persian letters. In the anonymous seventeenth-century treatise *Behjat al-ruh* [The Joy of Mind][63], we find the following tale:

> There exists an account by [a certain] sheikh that in one of the settlements of Bidj-Negarman, the arable districts of Hindustan, there lives a kind of bird of unusual appearance, which they called the Qoqnos [Gr. Kyknos, swan], long-lived and short in height. God, the Highest and Immaculate, great be [His] majesty, made in the beak of this bird, which is around two spans long, 1002 holes, some small, others larger, such that [this bird] performs an exceptionally sad melody. When two hundred years have passed in the life of this bird, he will fly to the top of the mountain, where he will settle, whilst other birds, by the Creator's absolute might, having gathered up dry twigs,

[59] Originally, Apollo was the demonic deity of the sudden death of men and at the same time (in the Iliad) the god of music and song – cf. Andrzej M. Kempiński, *Encyklopedia mitologii ludów indoeuropejskich* [Encylopaedia of the mythologies of Indo-European peoples], Warsaw, Iskry, 2001, p. 86.

[60] Pierre Grimal, Apollo, in *Słownik mitologii greckiej i rzymskiej*, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[61] Plato, *Phaedo*, XXXV 84 E, 85, B.

[62] Amnon Shiloah, *The Singing Birds*, in Szymon Paczkowski (ed.), *Muzyka wobec tradycji. Idee-dzieło-recepcja* [Music and tradition. Ideas, the work and reception], Warsaw, Instytut Muzykologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2004, pp. 83–89.

[63] The oldest extant manuscript of Behjat al-ruh dates from 1627. Polish edn. as *Uczta dla ducha. Muzyka perska drugiego renesansu*, trans. Anna Bylińska-Naderi, Warsaw, Dialog, 2002.

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> bring them for him [and] build a high mound. Then the Qoqnos flies in, and having sat down on this stack, he begins to sing in a suitable tone, and to produce melodies of a pleasant harmony, and with each increasingly deep breath from every hole in his beak will emanate a wondrous melody and unusual sound, as if one were to imagine a thousand people gathered together in one place, each longingly humming in a particular key. When ten days have passed, the bird will beat his wings and raise with them a fire [which] will fall onto the pile of dry twigs. This bird will stand in the flames, and when he turns to ashes, a blue egg will appear in the first. After forty days, a baby Qoqnos will hatch and emerge in the image of the fathers.

One easily notices that the swan (Qoqnos) described in the Persian legend corresponds to the figure of the phoenix, the protagonist of one of the central myths of European culture, which perishes in flames and is reborn from the ashes. In classical Greek literature, the earliest mentions of the Phoenix come from Herodotus, with many details later added by poets, mythographers, astrologers and naturalists. Among the different classical variants on the myth, particularly striking is the account of Flavius Philostratus (170–*c.*245), who in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* maintains that the dying Phoenix sings his own funeral song[64]:

> The phoenix, meanwhile, is a bird which visits Egypt every five hundred years, but the rest of that time it flies about in India; and it is unique in that it gives out rays of sunlight and shines with gold, in size and appearance like an eagle; and it sits upon the nest; which is made by it at the springs of the Nile out of spices. The story of the Egyptians about it, that it comes to Egypt, is testified to by the Indians also, but the latter add this touch to the story, that the phoenix which is being consumed in its nest sings funeral strains for itself. And this is also done by the swans according to the account of those who have the wit to hear them[65].

So the Qoqnos' bill is a gigantic flute, perforated by many holes of various size. On this proto-instrument the bird sings sad melodies, bewailing its own death by fire, which is the source and beginning of a new life. Such an account can be found in the celebrated *Manteq at-Tair* [*The Conference of the Birds*] by Farid ud-Din Attar (d. *c.*1220):

> The phoenix is an admirable and lovely bird which lives in Hindustan. It has no mate and lives alone. Its beak, which is very long and hard, is pierced like a flute with nearly a hundred holes. Each of these holes gives out a sound and

[64] Roelof van den Broek claims that the source for Philostratus' version may have been *Manteq at-Tair* [The Conference of the Birds] by Farid ud-din Attar, a Persian mystic of the twelfth century. See *The Myth of the Phoenix according to Classical and Early Christian Traditions*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1972, p. 201.

[65] Flavius Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, trans. F. C. Conybeare, Harvard University Press, 1912.

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in each sound is a particular secret. Sometimes he makes music through the holes, and when the birds hear his sweet plaintive notes they are agitated, and the most ferocious beasts are in rapture; then they all become silent. A philosopher once visited this bird and learnt from him the science of music[66].

Attar's account was repeated almost unchanged by other Persian poets and musicographers. *The Joy of Mind*, cited here earlier, contains an account of how Plato finds himself in the wilderness, where he ponders the fate of the Qoqnos and hears its song. In grasping the profound sense of the bird's sacrifice, he also comprehends the tragedy and beauty of its dying lament. The melody of the lament of the Qoqnos, an envoy from the other world, revealed to Plato the music that he has made manifest, becoming its inventor, the first musician and the first scholar in this field:

It is said that the divine Plato, by the will of the Creator, went to that wilderness, comprehending the vicissitudes [of fate] of the Qoqnos, scrutinising it, thanks to his great perspicacity, wisdom and intelligence, adopted some of the wondrous doleful tunes of the Qoqnos' lament. Other sages, meanwhile, each with the great power of his awareness, considered every melody to be [derived] from some animal, and placed them in a row of pitches[67].

In the treatise of music [*Resale-je musighi*] by Darvish Ali Changi, an eminent musician and singer at the court of the Ashtarkhanid ruler Imam Ghuli (1608–1642), resident in Bukhara, the inventor of music was "a certain philosopher" who heard the lament of the Phoenix:

The Qoqnos, a wondrous, charming bird,
Lives in Hindustan.
It has a beak of remarkable length,
With openings, as on a flute (nay).
Almost one hundred holes are on that beak.
This bird has no mate. It is solitary.
When it cries bitter-bitter in every hole,
Then fish and birds are perturbed.
There was a certain philosopher, who from the tune of this bird
devised a science of music[68].

Besides the Qoqnos, Persian tradition also knows the Simorg, yet another variant on the singing Phoenix. The Simorg is a bird so monstrous that it can pick up an elephant or camel. It resembles a peacock with the head of a dog and a lion's

[66] Farid ud-din Attar, *The Conference of The Birds*, English translation C.S. Nott, London, 1954 (reissued 1961), pp. 66–67.

[67] Behjat al-ruh (see above, n. 71), p. 78.

[68] Darvish Ali Changi, *Resale-je musighi* [Treatise of Music], p. 32.

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claws. Sometimes portrayed with a human face, it is part mammal: it has teeth, and breastfeeds its young. Its enemies are snakes, and its natural habitat consists of water-filled places. The Simorg has a beak with thirty holes, through which it forces air whenever it is hungry. At such moments, the animals around hear a lovely music and gather on the peak of a mountain; the Simorg then flies up and devours them all. According to old Iranian accounts, the Simorg lived for 1700 years, and perished in flames. Later versions relate that it is immortal, and nests in the Tree of Knowledge[69].

CONCLUSION

We do not know what exactly Democritus and then Lucretius had in mind when writing that music was discovered by people at the beginning of time by imitating "with their mouths the pure voice of birds". However, on the basis of the testimonies presented here, it appears almost certain that the essence of the mimetic conception of the origins of music could not have been simple repetition and imitation, even of the most beautiful sounds and melodies of birds, especially if we take into account the fact that very often the birds with which, in many traditions, the origins of music are associated, are not even songbirds. Such is the case, for example, with the *muni* dove among the Kaluli, or the swan in ancient Greece. This means that the aesthetic qualities of birdsong were not necessarily the decisive factor in the forming of notions regarding the beginnings of music. Their essence is the metaphorisation of birds, identified with a materialised, seen form of man's spirituality, a manifestation of his spirit or soul; more specifically, of a soul separating from the body after death. The animal form of human spirituality would seem to correspond to the conception of the "source metaphors" described by Ricoeur, which contain the most fundamental experience of man in his discourse with the natural world around him[70]. This is the profound, inner experience of one's own duality as a physical and spiritual being, which symbolically, in avian form, transcends the level of material reality.

The metamorphosis of man into bird is accompanied by a cry, which changes into weeping, passing into lament and song. In the mythical tradition of many cultures, it is of this dramatic dying cry that music is supposed to have been born:

> When the men bearing the deceased on their shoulders began to descend the hillside on which we stood, the women began to wail: at least, what we heard at first was wailing. Then we slowly discerned that a sort of modulated

[69] According to Ovid, the phoenix builds his nest at the top of a palm tree (foinix). The palm symbolises the Tree of Knowledge (Tree of Life, Cosmic Tree, etc.).

[70] Paul Ricoeur, *Język, tekst, interpretacja*, trans. Piotr Graff and K. Rosner, Warsaw: PIW, 1989, p. 148. [Eng. orig. *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, Fort Worth, Texas Christian Press, 1976.]

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sobbing was coming from their mouths, which soon turned into quite harmonious songs[71].

The protomusical and paramusical character of lament allows us to postulate its profoundly archaic nature. Spanning spontaneous spasm, emotional speech, melodious weeping and mournful song, lament enables man to gain ritualised, rhythmised and musicalised control over the feeling of destruction and solitude in the face of death. Thus lament is emotion 'artistically formed', and this doubtless explains how it has been preserved in cultural memory as a 'song of beginning'.

[71] Jean-Paul Roux, *Les traditions des nomads de la Turquie méridionale.* Contribution à l'étude des représentations religieuses des sociétés turques d'après les enquêtes effectuées les Yörük et les Tahtacï par J.-P. Roux et K. Özbayrï, Paris, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie d'Instanbul, 1970, p. 24.

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SHAMANIC COSMOLOGY AND ITS REFLECTION IN SHAMANIC TEXTS: THE CHALKAN SHAMANESSES' CASE STUDY

GALINA BORISOVNA SYTCHENKO

In a broad sense, cosmology is considered to be a vision on the universe, a representation and organisation of space [Fabietti e Remotti 2001, p. 204–205]; in other words, a cosmology is a *system representing the structure of the Universe*. In traditional cultures, this system is expressed mainly in mythopoetical terms. It relates, undoubtedly, to shamanic traditions, in which the mythopoetical basis reveals itself in a particularly clear fashion. One might ask what a shamanic cosmology is like, and, then, whether there exists any specific shamanic cosmology, a shamanic worldview. This question was posed by I. M. Lewis [Lewis 1999], but the author gave no exact answer, preferring to deal with such important matters as relationships between spirit possession and/or shamanism. Meanwhile, the question of specific shamanic cosmology is still open, which is why it needs discussing again. I take the liberty of assuming that some specific feature of shamanic cosmology does exist. If so, it should be connected with a fundamental trait of this particular religious form, namely the shaman's power to enter into *direct* and *active* contact with a spiritual world[1]. Through such contacts, the shaman knows this world much better than any other member of a given society, not just in theory, but also in practice.

The structure of the "shamanic cosmos" [Mastromattei and Rigopoulos 1999], or the "shamanic universe", differs from culture to culture. Moreover, it differs from shaman to shaman. On the basis of my research on shamanic traditions among the Southern Siberian Turks, spanning over two decades, I may state that no

[1] I do not wish to concentrate on the problem of a too broad interpretation of the term *shaman*. I cannot share this currently popular point of view for the following reasons. Even the very first observers of shamanic rituals distinguished the shamanic figure from other ritual specialists and described the characteristic features of shamanic activity. Since then very little has changed, but owing to the progressive disappearance of traditional shamans, a very strong tendency has arisen to describe all ritual specialists – and especially healers – as shamans. It must be admitted that this causes great confusion and does not contribute to an understanding of shamanism as such. I only refer here to some famous classical works on the subject, such as Shirokogoroff 1935, Eliade 1964 (1951), Hultkrantz 1978, Basilov 1984, Holmberg 1996 (1989), and others.

REF/JEF, *1–2*, p. 25–40, Bucureşti, 2008

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general shamanic cosmology exists among peoples of the region. It seems that each single shaman during his/her life creates his/her own shamanic cosmology, in which both general concepts (universal, ethnic, clanic, and so on) and individual experience play equally important roles. This is true even for closely related shamans belonging to the same clan lineage. During his/her life, a shaman not only inherits spirits and knowledge from his/her predecessors – which is a compulsory condition! – but acquires new, personal ones. For example, in well-known cases in Southern Siberia, a shaman/shamaness "drew" spirits from a wife/husband's side [Potapov 1991]. Specific routes of ritual journeys also create a cosmos for a particular shaman. Thus, shamanic cosmology proves to be a multi-layered phenomenon. It has a complex structure, based on: (a) universal cosmological archetypes; (b) ethnic mythology; (c) clanic knowledge, and (d) individual experience. As a result, *shamanic cosmology* can be defined as a shaman's system of representations of the structure of the universe, and the *shamanic cosmos/shamanic universe* as the universe the shaman "sees" (knows/imagines/represents).

The materials of my research are of various origins. Besides data from literature and archive sources, I have mainly used my own field collections. The particular case that I present here was chosen because of its significance and relevance. Data were collected during five expeditions: (1) January 1985; (2) July 1985; (3) July 1992; (4) June 2005, and (5) August 2007. The main set of information was obtained in 1992. Expeditions took place in the Turochak district of the Republic of Altai, the first three in the small village of Suranash, where the Chalkan shamanic family Barbachakov lived at that time, and the last two in the district centre of Turochak, to which one of the protagonists of my story moved recently. The head of the family, the very powerful Chalkan shaman Kazakop Barbachakov, with whom – I suppose – the famous Russian scholar L. P. Potapov worked in the 1920s and the 1930s, had 16 children, but only two daughters were alive when I and another student arrived by helicopter at Suranash in the winter of 1985[2]. The eldest sister – Kandarakova Aleksandra Kazakopovna (1913-1995) – had a grandson, Kostya, who died under tragic circumstances; the younger sister – Abasheva Aleksandra Kazakopovna (1926-) – had no children (her only child died very early). They were not only the last descendants of the family, but also of the whole Sert clan, which thus will no longer exist. The younger sister, A. K. Abasheva, who inherited the shamanic power, lived many years outside her motherland, in the industrial region of Kuzbass. For this reason, after Kazakop's death, the second husband of the elder sister, Kandarakov Manakop Denisovich, shaman and famous epic singer, temporarily acquired Kazakop's spirits, which then joined those of the elder sister. She shamanised for several years, but really was just a temporary holder of the shamanic "post", as herself stated. "I am not a

[2] For more details, see Sytchenko 2000.

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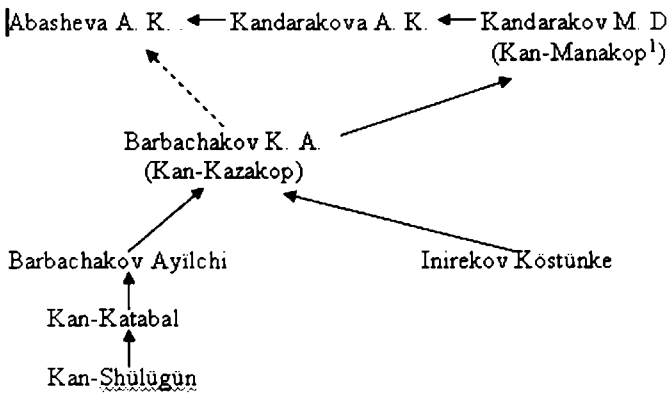
real shaman", she said when I asked her about details of shamanic activity in general. "Go to San'ka[3] and ask her. She is a shaman". When the real shamaness, who had been called by the spirits, came back to Suranash, A. K. Kandarakova stopped shamanising. It is a very interesting case of indirect transmission of shamanic power, showing how elastic shamanic tradition can be under unfavourable circumstances. The following diagram illustrates the case:



For a better understanding of this family's shamanic worldview I used two main methods for investigation – direct and indirect. The former, to study the system of representations directly by interviewing the shamanesses, and the latter, to study it by analysing shamanic texts. Despite her referring to San'ka as a "real shaman", Shura knew "the theory" of their shamanic tradition very well. Being older then her sister and having had longer contact with their father, besides being simply a very intelligent person, she was a real expert in shamanic ideology, while the younger sister was more of a "practitioner" of the shamanic profession. From her I received very important, detailed information about physiological and mental peculiarities. When in 1992 I went to Suranash, I had at my disposal the text of a shamanic séance, performed by Shura in 1985, transcribed and translated into Russian by Chalkan historian and ethnographer Ekaterina Pavlovna Kandarakova. The text, containing a lot of "blank" fragments, sometimes seemed unintelligible. In discussing such fragments many times with both sisters, little by little it became not only more comprehensible, but also revealed a well-organised poetic structure[4]. Recently, this text was published and its verbal structure was analysed [Sytchenko 2004b, 2005]. This methodology helped reconstruct the general outline of the shamanic pantheon of Barbachakov's family, which is, as I hope to show below, part of a shamanic cosmology.

[3] San'ka is diminutive of Alexandra, as well as Shura. In order to distinguish the two sisters who bore the same name, people called them by these pet names.

[4] That it has a beautiful musical structure was evident to me from the very beginning.

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Despite the fact that concrete shamanic cosmologies differ from each other, there are, indeed, some common conceptual features that should be discussed. Thus, in the Turkic traditions of Southern Siberia, shamanic cosmologies include two main aspects. The first one is material, i.e., the physical structure of the Universe, consisting of the sky – with sun, moon, stars (especially, *Cholbon/Sholbon* [= Venus]; *Jeti kaan/Chetïgan* 'Seven Princes' [= the Great Bear]; *Altïn Kazïk* 'Golden pole' [= Polar Star]), rainbow, etc. – as well as the earth (with mountains, rivers, lakes, springs, and so on). In the Barbachakovs' case I didn't find any precise conception of the underground world. Instead, their cosmos has two main spheres – celestial and terrestrial. The former has a multi-layered structure, which is a dominant concept throughout the region, and the latter includes "good" and "bad" places. Good places are where people live, where they have their main activity. Bad places are the abode of dangerous creatures (marshes, cemeteries, abandoned settlements, and so on). Very often such places are associated with stagnant water, while good places are connected with running water. Mountains are a very important feature of the cosmos, because they connect celestial and terrestrial zones.

The second aspect of the shamanic cosmos is of a spiritual structure, manifesting itself as supernatural beings, related to the levels of the universe and/or to physical objects of the universe itself. Many of them are presented as anthropomorphic creatures, living in one or another part of the shamanic cosmos[5]. Practically, each represents a cosmos in itself, because each of these supernatural creatures represents and symbolizes some specific part of the universe. By invoking them during the *kamlaniye* – the shamanic séance –, the shaman recreates the universe each and every time.

Comparing these two aspects leads us to important conclusions. Some of the cosmic objects are mere objects, and they do not play an essential role in shamanic activity. Much more essential is another group of cosmic elements, which have a double – physical and spiritual – nature. In this case, the two aspects do not exist without each other. This is expressed very clearly in the terminology. There is a well-known expression, *tag eezi*, usually translated as 'master of the mountain'. In my opinion this is not quite correct, because, in this case, grammatically it should be *tagdïŋ eezi*. But I have never met with such an expression, either in literature or during the interviews. Neither is it a contraction of the grammatical form. I guess that the more correct translation would be 'mountain-master', which on the conceptual level means equality between the physical object (the mountain) and the spiritual subject (its master). On the other hand, one can point at the greater importance and much higher status of the spiritual aspect. This aspect is at least accessible for communication purposes, and therefore for the influence exerted by

[5] Zoomorphism also appears in this system, but it does not play a main role. Some zoomorphic creatures do not represent a whole cosmos, being just auxiliary characters and minor spirits. On the other hand, some significant figures, such as, for example, the master of mountain, are occasionally shown as animals – bear or red deer. That, undoubtedly, would take us back to a much more ancient phase of shamanism.

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the shaman. The spiritual aspect of shamanic cosmology is an essential part of the "shamanic pantheon".

It is not an easy to reconstruct the shamanic pantheon. Modern ritual specialists often refer only to a very limited part of it. In the case of the Barbachakov family, however, I managed to receive fairly complete information and to reconstruct the family's shamanic pantheon. Its structure consists of several different categories:

- *tegriler* 'heaven-dwellers' (*T'azhin*[6] – Supreme God; *Kïrgïs* – divine couple; their servants *torshin*; *Poktan* – deity of rain; *Uvay*, *Payna* – personal protectors);
- *eeziler* 'masters' – of mountains (*tag eeziler*, 17 names, the main – *eezi* of clanic mountain *Solop*[7]), rivers (*suu eeziler*, 3 names);
- *jurt eeziler* 'masters of house' (*Tevir-kanïm*, *Öön-kanïm*);
- *ot eezi* 'master of fire';
- ancestors – real (*Kan-Kazakop*, *Kan-Manakop*, *Kan-Köstünke*) and mythical (*Kan-Katabal*, *Kan-Shülügün*);
- spirits-helpers (*Ogïr-Bukchi*, 100-joint Goose);
- *Erlik* – head of bad spirits;
- *azeler* – harmful spirits, for whom very often the word *shaytan* is used;
- *üzüt* – deceased, whose soul was not properly set, itself becoming a harmful spirit.

Among them, the entities I call the shaman's "patronizing forces" play the most important role. Shamanesses call them "suite", because they follow the shaman during the ritual journey. Some of them are active (spirit-helpers and *tag eeziler*), others are more passive (ancestors), but are very close to the shaman. Other categories are somehow apart from the shaman, who has to connect to them. Nevertheless, on a conceptual level, this pantheon is characterized by the following common features:

- anthropomorphism, revealed both in outward appearance and in the behaviour of the spiritual creatures;
- universal kinship of all categories, irrespective of their intimacy with the shaman;
- concept of an emanation of spiritual energy, irradiated by the Supreme God through all other categories, down to the shaman and his tribe.

Now we pass on to the main question: how are these concepts revealed by shamanic texts[8]? As far as the *verbal component* is concerned, it seems fairly clear:

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[6] I give names as shamanesses spelled them. In ethnographical literature similar names can be found, but in different forms, for example, *T'azhigan*, *Poktïgan*, etc. In shamanic texts names are usually transformed: *T'azhin* becomes *Ava-T'azhin* 'Father-*T'azhin*', *Uvay* – *Uvay-ene* 'Mother-*Uvay*', etc.; see also footnote 4.

[7] During kamlaniye, he is called *Ava-Solog* 'Father-*Solog*'.

[8] Under the term "text" I mean text as a complex unity of both verbal and musical components.

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from this point of view, shamanic texts – at least, partly – are none other than a kind of list, nomenclature, or register of supernatural creatures, and, therefore, of a shamanic cosmos. The examples given below include several names of deities, spirit-helpers, ancestors, mountain-masters, etc. Another essential feature of shamanic texts – their dialogue structure – is consistently found[9]. This dialogue is expressed by means of several formulae. First, it is an appeal to the shaman's authorities and, second, their answer in the form of a question:

Shaman: – O-o-o! *Aksïyalug*[10]!
Spirit: – O-o-o! What happened, *Adanïg*[11]?

These two utterances are also expressed in formulaic structures on a musical level. The former presents a rising melodic contour, while the latter – i.e. the opposite – is a falling melodic contour. The exclamations at the beginning of lines are always on the highest point of the scale. I proposed calling these stable structures *leitmotifs* [Sytchenko 2004b]. The third leitmotif of a given text is a magic formula, accompanied by the sprinkling of vodka, "*Shayïk* I make!", with rising-falling melodic contour.

Thus, as we can see, the presence of the shamanic pantheon (= shamanic cosmos) is found in shamanic texts not only on a verbal but also on a musical level as well. It strikes us that leitmotifs, being formulae, reveal the spirits/deities' presence in rather general way, without individualisation. In this connection, we should discuss a popular hypothesis correlating the spirit's presence with particular melodic structures. It is a well-known fact that in some traditional cultures such a correlation does exist: the presence of spirits is expressed through the appearance of individual melodies in the course of the *kamlaniye*. This is typical, for instance, of Nganasans [Dobzhanskaya 2002]. As far as the Turkic traditions of Southern Siberia are concerned, such a correlation has not been found. The pantheon, being represented *verbally*, is not expressed *musically*. To be more exact, it is not represented *melodically*. I know of only one case in which a particular category of spiritual creatures was identified by an individual melody. In the unique Kumandin shamanic text, the category of Tuvan spirits is represented – in my opinion, rather consciously – by means of a special melody, imitating the Tuvan shaman singing [Sytchenko 1997], but that, as I said, is a unique case. More often "the presence" of

[9] This feature is only revealed during a real séance, when the shaman contacts the spirits. Some shamanic texts, sung outside the ritual (for example, included in some narration, or performed for propedeutic purposes), represent only a nomenclature of the various cosmic elements.

[10] *Aksïyalug* literally means 'possessing white [that is sacred] food/sacrifice'. It is an allegorical name for any supernatural creature.

[11] *Adanïg* means 'having *adan*'. *Adan* 'camel', or *ak-adan* 'white [/celestial/sacred] camel' is an allegorical name for the shamanic drum in South-Siberia [Potapov 1991]. Therefore, *adanïg* means 'having drum', that is, 'shaman'.

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spiritual personages is expressed in a different way. Except for leitmotifs, revealing their presence, this is definitely manifested by *shamanic intonising*[12].

First of all, I will speak about voice intonising, which undergoes numerous changes during the shamanic séance. The fundamental direction of this process is the *slackening of the vocal principle* and the *strengthening of the signal principle.* Example 1 represents the beginning of a séance, and Examples 2 and 3 show some other parts[13]. It starts with a vocal intonising,(see footnote 13) in which fragments of signal intonising are sometimes incorporated (in notation they are shown by the sign " ˋ "). At the end the vocal intonising practically disappears, and is replaced by tonic speech, also with signal intonising, which represents the shamaness, in a state of extreme excitement, who has visions[14].

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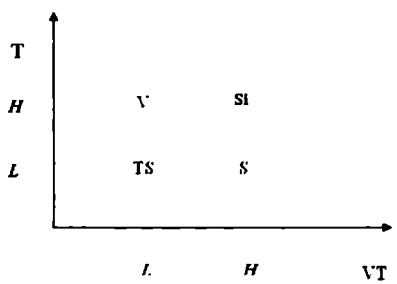
[12] A few words are necessary about the term "intonising". Once I gave a presentation on this subject, and as it was not published, I can just quote myself. "The term is widely used in Russian ethnomusicology as well as in musical acoustics and the study of musical performances at large. The most commonly accepted meaning of the term 'intonising' is *the producing of human sound with a cultural meaning*. There is a clear distinction between human sounds in general and intonising as a *cultural* phenomenon. Two distinguishing features divide voice intonising into four main classes: *vocal, speech, signal* and *tonic speech* [Mazepus 1998]. The first one concerns the tension of the speech organs (T); the second is the variation of this tension (VT). Thus, *vocal intonising* (V) is characterised by a high tension of the speech organs and its low variation in a sound flow; *speech intonising* (S) is characterised by a low tension of the speech organs and its high variation in a sound flow; *signal intonising* (Si) is characterised by a high tension of the speech organs and its high variation in a sound flow; *tonic speech intonising* (TS) is characterised by a low tension of the speech organs and its low variation in a sound flow" [Sytchenko 2004a]. The scheme below, showing this classification, was made on the basis of a drawing by V. V. Mazepus:



[13] All examples are taken from the text of the only *kamlaniye* performed by A. K. Kandarakova. As far as the texts received from A. K. Abasheva are concerned, they are currently being transcribed and analysed by a student of mine, Yulia Popova. We hope soon to carry out some comparative research on the Barbachakov family tradition.

[14] Following the Russian ethnomusicological tradition, I use detailed transcription with many additional "diacritics", which allows to represent characteristic reatures of the given intonising. As many other scholars, I fully realise its limitations. This question is one of the most often debated in Western ethnomusicology (see, for intance, recent materials from XIX ESEM in [Marian-Bălaşa 2005b]). Reliable review of the main concepts, ideas and problems on the subject one can find in Marin Marian-Bălaşa's article [Marian-Bălaşa 2005a]. From methodological point of view I share Frank Kouwenhoven's approach to using western staff notation [Kouwenhoven 2005:140]. Also Triinu Ojamaa's differentive look at two types of graphic representation of intonational phenomena seems to be fruitful [Ojamaa 2005:65]).

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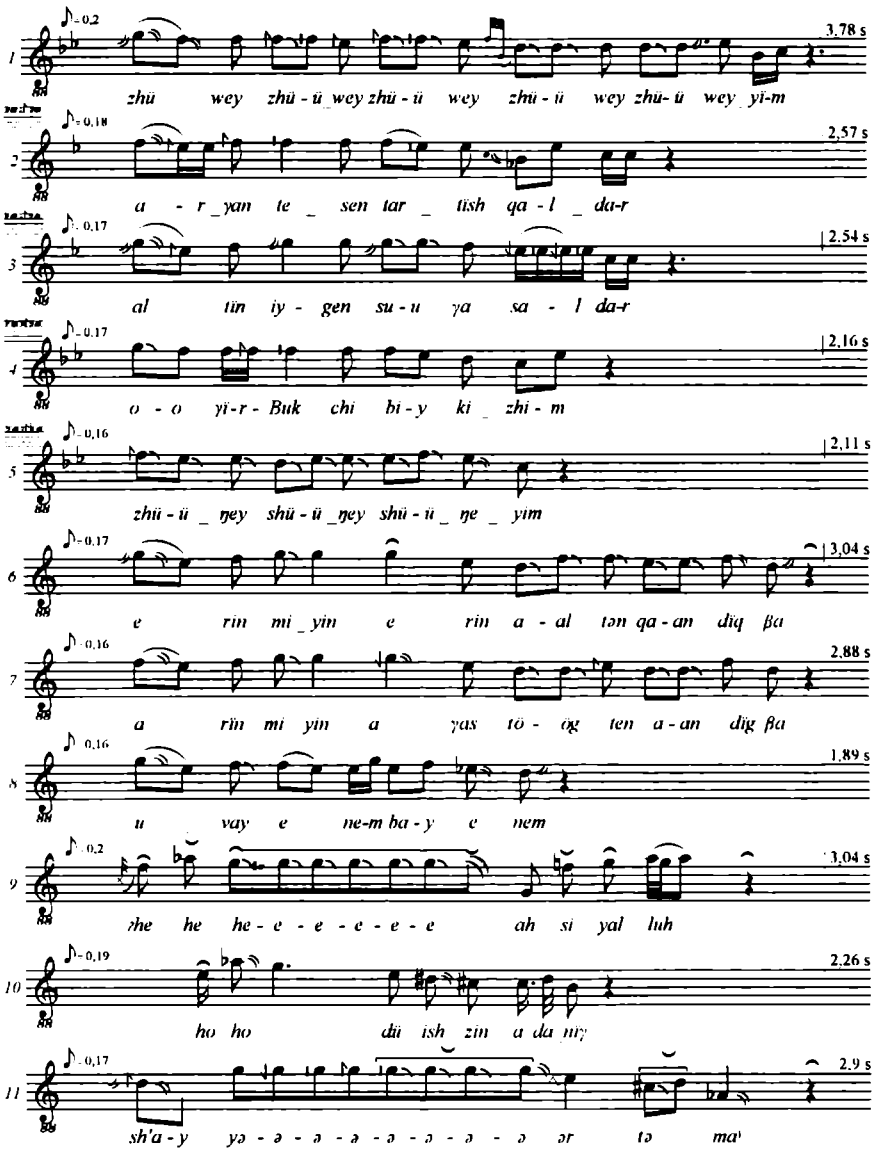
In A. K. Kandarakova's text, some fragments could be interpreted as spirit voices. Examples 3 demonstrates the "voice" of mountain *Altïn-Tagan*[15].

Example 1. The beginning of the shamanic séance, performed by A.K. Kandarakova in 1985

1 ♪=0,2 3,78 s
zhü wey zhü - ü wey zhü - ü wey zhü - ü wey zhü- ü wey yï-m
2 ♪=0,18 2,57 s
a - r_yan te _ sen tar _ tish qa - l _ da-r
3 ♪=0,17 2,54 s
al tïn iy - gen su - u ya sa - l da-r
4 ♪=0,17 2,16 s
o - o yï-r - Buk chi bi - y ki _ zhi - m
5 ♪=0,16 2,11 s
zhü - ü _ ŋey shü - ü _ŋey shü - ü _ ŋe _ yim
6 ♪=0,17 3,04 s
e rin mi _ yin e rin a - al tən qa - an diq βa
7 ♪=0,16 2.88 s
a rïn mi yin a yas tö - ög ten a - an diğ βa
8 ♪ 0,16 1,89 s
u vay e ne-m ba - y e nem
9 ♪=0,2 3,04 s
zhe he he - e - e - e - e - e ah si yal luh
10 ♪=0,19 2.26 s
ho ho dü ish zïn a da nïy
11 ♪=0,17 2,9 s
sh'a - y yə - ə - ə - ə - ə - ə - ə - ə ər tə ma'

[15] This interpretation was proposed by E. P. Kandarakova. After analysing the text I agree with such an interpretation.

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1. – Жӱвей, жӱвей, жӱвей, жӱвей, жӱвейим
2. Аргын тӧзинъ тартыш калдар,
3. Алтын ӱйген суга салдар,
4. Огыр-Букчи Пий кижим!
5. Шӱнъей, шӱнъей, шӱнъейим.
6. Эринмийин эрин алтан кандыг ба?
7. Арынмийин агаш тегтен андыг ба?
8. Увай-энем, пай энем!
9. *Хе-хе-хе*! Аксыйалуг!
10. – *Хо-хо*! Тьуг [к]иж[и]зин, Аданыг?
11. – Шайы[к] иртема!
12. Кӱнӱкте ле кӱльвӱрещь,
13. Тьалыкте ле тьалвыращ.
14. Эркил кужинъ андыг бо?
15. Инчеп келтен андыг бо?
16. Ай(-н) сайын аданзам,
17. Арышмалар, улустар,
18. Кӱнӱнъ сайны кычырзам
19. Кускунмелер, [улустар].
20. – *А-ха-хох*!
21. – Шайы[к] иртема!
22. Тевир-кааннын дьес углум,
23. Кара Тьылган [камчылыг] Уүай клу,
24. Кан-Шӱлӱгӱн сен эденъ!
25. Тевир туткан, Уүай үоу,
26. Терси туткан сен эде[нъ]!
27. Купан адын покунап,
28. Колы-пудынъ тьалтырап,
29. Коош-сынынъ бусунап,
30. Кӧк тегрининъ сыртына,
31. Кӧк кувайлу кудай бол,
32. Ава-Тажын кудай ол,
33. По полтыр!
34. – *А-хо-хо, о-о-о!*
35. – Кадыр [от] кав[ал]ар кавыжийвиньзе деп!
36. – Е-хо! Чуг болд[ы], Аданыг?

1. – *Zhüwey, zhüwey, zhüwey, zhüwey, zhüweyim*[16].
2. You helped to call *tös'es*,
3. Bridled by golden bridles,
4. *Ogïr-Bukchi*, my Lord!
5. *Shüŋey, shüŋey, zhüŋeyim*.
6. Can one take lips without boredom?
7. Can one touch the wood without fatigue?
8. Mother *Uvay*, my sacred mother!
9. *He-he-he*! *Aksïyalug*!
10. – *Ho-ho*! What a man you are, *Adanïg*?
11. – *Shayïk* I make!
12. Speaking during the day,
13. Invoking during the light.
14. You are all-powerful, aren't you?
15. You always come, don't you?
16. If I will appeal every month,
17. Don't be offended, people,
18. If I will call you every day,
19. Don't be burdened, [people].
20. – *A-ha-hoh*!
21. – *Shayïyk* I make!
22. My copper son of *Tevir-khan*,
23. [Having whip] of black snake, *Uyay klu*,
24. You are, *Khan-Shülügün*!
25. Holding iron, *Uyay you*,
26. Holding life, you do!
27. Your horse-stallion is rocking,
28. Your arms-legs are swinging,
29. All your torso is glittering with sweat,
30. Over the blue sky,
31. God, having chestnut horse,
32. This is the god *Ava-T'azhin*,
33. Here he is!
34. – *A-ho-ho, o-o-o!*
35. – Severe master of fire, turned into an ash!
36. – *E-ho!* What happened, *Adanïg*?

[16] Words which cannot be translated, such as names, terms, are given in italics, as well as exclamations both in the Chalkan and the English versions.

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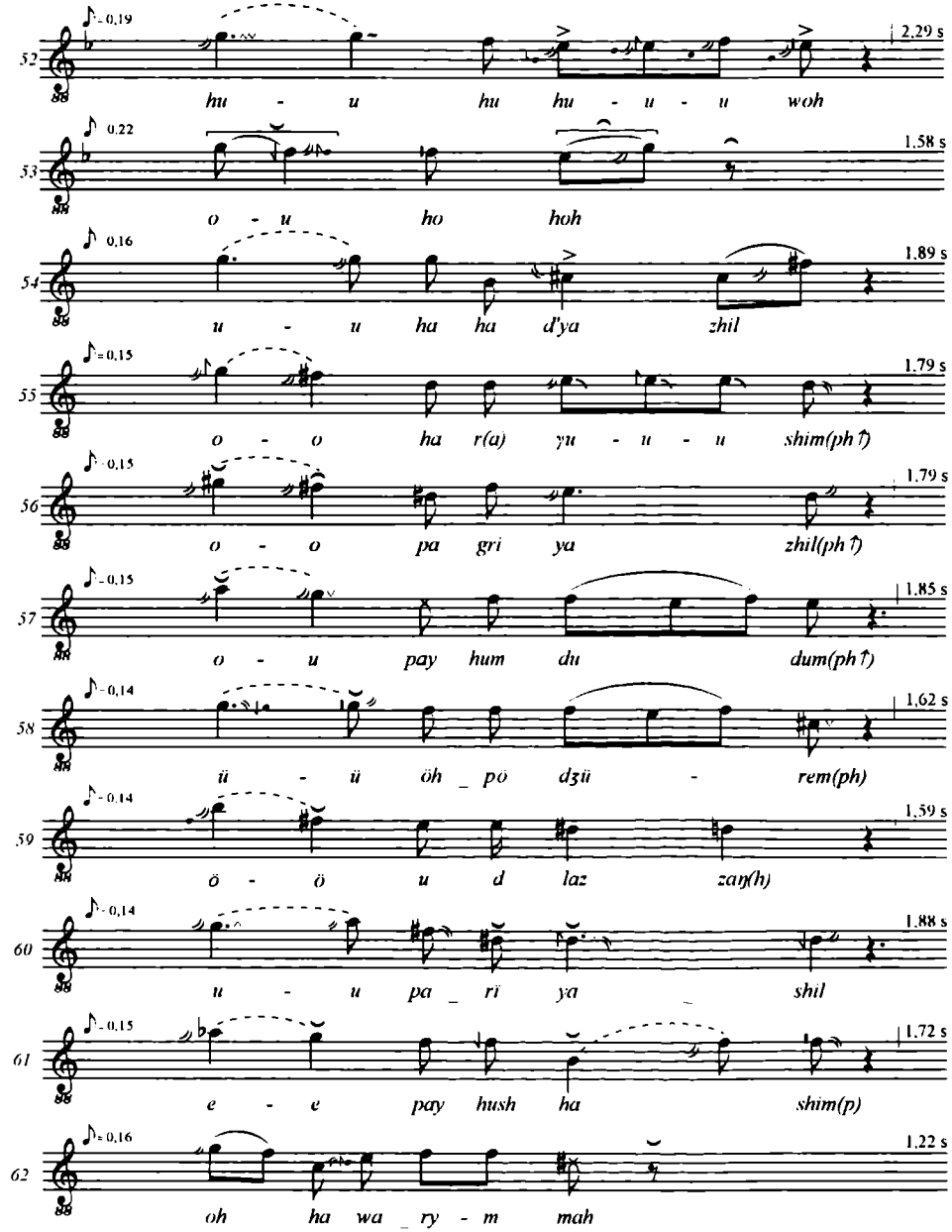
Example 2. Calling 100-jointed Goose



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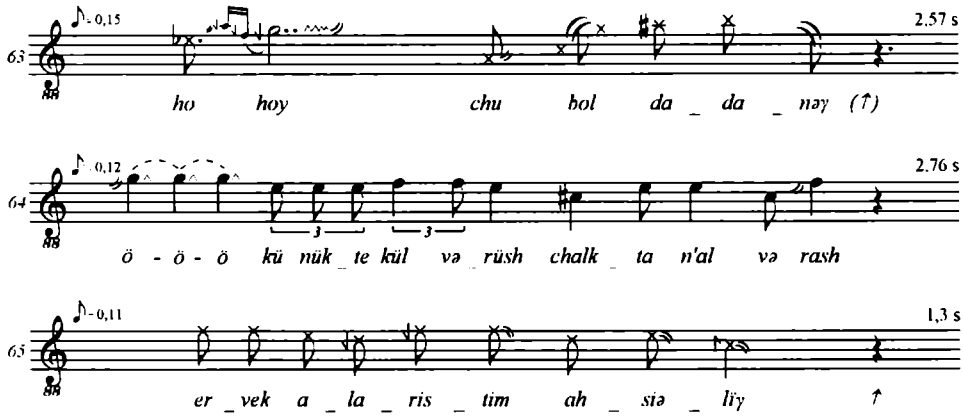
63
0,15
2,57 s
ho hoy chu bol da _ da _ nəγ (↑)
64
0,12
2.76 s
ö - ö - ö kü nük _ te kül və _ rüsh chalk _ ta n'al və rash
65
0,11
1,3 s
er _ vek a _ la _ ris _ tim ah _ siə _ liγ ↑

51. *Э, хо-о*! Аксыйалуг!

52. *Ху-ху-ху, ох*!

53. *О-хо-хох*!

54. *У*! Кана[ды] дьажыл,

55. *О*! Кара кужым,

56. *О*! Пагры йажыл,

57. *Оу*! Пай кудындым,

58. *Ӱ*! Өкпө-дьӱрем,

59. *Ӧ*! Узадалзанъ,

60. *У*! Пагры йажыл,

61. *Е*! Пай кушкажым,

62. *Ох*! Кавырымма!

63. – *Хо-хой*! Чуг болд[ы], Аданыг?

64. – *Хӧ*! Кӱнӱкте кӱльв[ӱ]решь, чал[ык]та ньалв[ы]рашь,

65. Эрвек аларайтым, Аксыйалуг!

51. *Э, ho-o*! *Aksïyalug*!

52. *Hu-hu-hu, oh*!

53. *O-ho-hoh*!

54. *U*! With green wings,

55. *O*! My black bird,

56. *O*! With green liver,

57. *Ou*! My sacred bird,

58. *Ü*! Lungs-heart

59. *Ö*! Make longer,

60. *U*! With green liver,

61. *E*! My sacred little bird,

62. *Oh*! Pull me!

63. – *Ho-hoj*! What happened, *Adanïg*?

64. – *Hö*! Speaking during the day, invoking during the light,

65. Let's talk, *Aksïyalug*!

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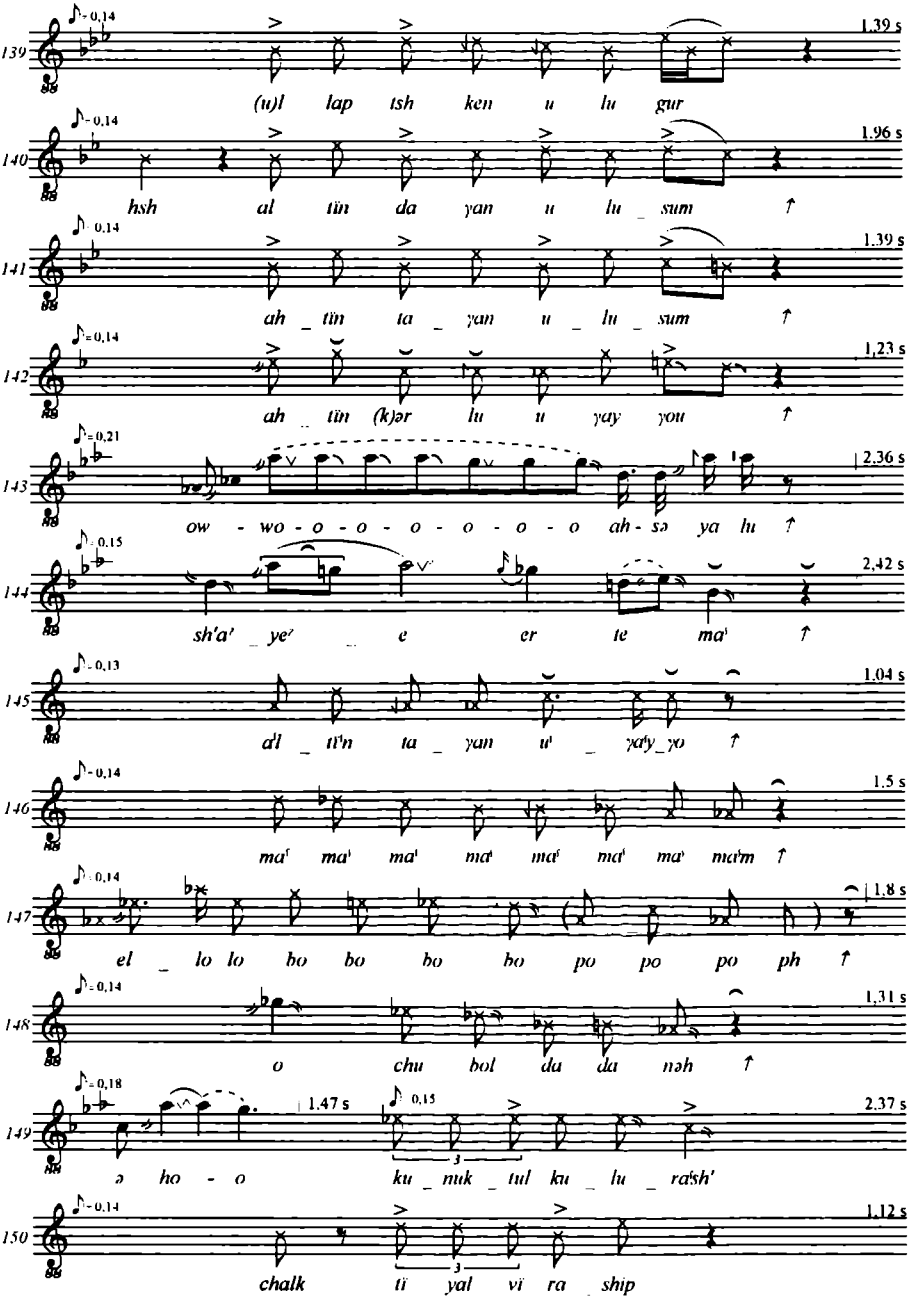
Example 3. Calling, answering and sounding of mountain *Altïn-Tagan*

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139. Ӱлген түшкен Улуг кыр,	139. Has been descending from *Ülgen*, the great crag,
140. Алтын Таган улузым,	140. *Altïn Tagan*, my homeland.
141. Алтын Таган улузым,	141. *Altïn Tagan*, my homeland.
142. Алтын кырлу, Уүай үоу.	142. With golden range, *Uyay you*.
143. *А, о-о-о-ох*! Аксыйалуг!	143. *A, o-o-o-oh*! *Aksïyalug*!
144. Шайы[к] иртема!	144. *Shayïk* I make!
145. Алтын Таган, Уүай үоу!	145. *Altïn Tagan, Uyay you*!
146. – *Ма, ма, ма, ма, ма, ма, ма, мам*!	146. – *Ma, ma, ma, ma, ma, ma, ma, mam*!
147. *Ел-ло, ло, бо, бо, бо, бо, бо, бо, бо, бо*!	147. *El-lo, lo, bo, bo, bo, bo, bo, bo, bo, bo*!
148. *Ох*! Чуг болд[ы], Аданыг?	148. *Oh!* What happened, *Adanïg*?
149. – *А, хо-о-о*! Күнүктӱ күльвӱращ,	149. – *A, ho-o-o!* Speaking during the day,
150. Чал[ы]кты йалвыращип*.	150. Invoking during the light*.
151. Ээр келзе, Аксыйалуг,	151. If the man will come, *Aksïyalug*,
152. *А-ха, э-э*! Кана пас[са], Аксыйалуг?	152. *A-ha, e-e!* Where to tread on, *Aksïyalug*?
153. Шайы[к] иртема!	153. *Shayïk* I make!

The shamaness A. K. Abasheva, with whom I had several long interviews, asking her about her sensations during the séance (the elder sister refused to discuss such matters), and how she feels the presence of spirits, told me the following. In general, she very often feels a kind of physical discomfort, which she defines as the "spirits pulling". If she doesn't perform for some time, the spirits themselves come and ask for treatment (food and drink), "pulling" the shaman. She starts to yawn compulsively and feels tickling. At the beginning of the séance she feels the same: compulsion to yawn, tickling and warmth all over her body. Once, during an interview, writing names of mountains-masters, dictated to me by Abasheva and her sister, I noticed how both of them yawned intensely and loudly, and then the younger sister said: "just by mentioning them, all my brains stir". She had in mind mentioning them outside the ritual context. I noticed the yawning also in other cases, and it was in the literature as well. This physiological act in the shamanic context is deemed to be of great importance, since through it the shaman lets the spirits in. I noticed that the yawning was not silent, but accompanied by sound, which led me to the hypothesis that, in shamanic texts, it is transformed into exclamations, regularly placed at the beginning of lines (see lines 9-10, 36, 51, 63-64, 143, 148-149, 152); alternatively, it becomes a whole line (such as lines 30, 34, 52, 53). However, it always marks the spirits' presence and is typical for a dialog with them. Then, exclamations may become a part of an absolutely regular line structure. Some fragments of text consist wholly of this type of line (see lines 54-62).One should notice, that exclamations are singled out by pitch – they are always

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performed in the highest part of a scale[17], and by rhythm – they last longer then other syllables.

I also received some very important data on how the shamaness A. K. Abasheva gets information from spirits during the séance. She told me that she does not see the spirits, but continually hears their voices, as well as having tactile sensations. At the beginning of each *kamlaniye* she goes to the clanic mountain-master *Solog*, from whom she receives all her equipment. First of all, he girds her with a 77-metre copper chain, from the lower part of her belly to her whole body, "so the body starts to feel tight". He also puts a blue band around her head, so that she feels that her hair is moving and rising up. After that she starts to invoke the spirits. During the séance she continually hears their voices.

I wrote – from shamanesses words – in my field diary on July 6, 1992, that during the *kamlaniye* she doesn't see spirits, but hears their voices. "They speak quietly, not loudly. Some of them just whisper". Voices are different – old and young. Mostly there are male voices, but sometimes a female voice whispers. They are heard from different directions, but they answer from the same side from which you call them. The voice may be heard by either the left or right ear. *Shaytans* (bad spirits) sometimes also reveal their voice. While receiving information from spirits about somebody's death, her throat tightens, and she sings with a very tight throat. "Where and who is to die soon – the throat will close completely. I cannot tell anything", she says. During shamanic flight, she also receives information from her spirits. Flying, she doesn't see where she flies; masters of mountains, flying together with the shaman, give information, having a word in her ears, which rivers, mountains and so on shaman flies. It means, that for this shamaness *hearing* is the most essential technique of communication with spirits.

Summing up, the following important conclusions are proposed.

During the *kamlaniye*, the shaman is in continuous dialogue (polylogue) with spirits. He calls them, pronouncing their sacred names and offering them "a fare". If they answer, he hears their voices, communicates with them and transmits their voices. This continuous dialogue or polylogue and, sometimes, even the sound of the spirits themselves is part of a shamanic text and can be heard by the audience. Shamanic intonising involves several features that reveal the spirit's presence:

- yawning at the beginning, before the séance, which is then transformed into special signals – exclamations – representing the presence of supernatural creatures;
- changing of the voice during the shamanic séance, which follows the process of communication with the spirits, as well as reflecting the process of changes in the shaman's state of consciousness;

[17] Actually, it is very difficult to speak about "scale": examples show its extraordinary mobility.

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– using a series of onomatopoeic sounds, indicating spirit voices;
– the dialogue structure of the shamanic text;
– using the special dialogue formulae marking the spirits' presence.

In other words, in South-Siberian traditions the shamanic cosmology is reflected – at least, as we can see in this particular case – both in the verbal and musical components of the texts. Musically, it is expressed not so much melodically as by a specific (shamanic) intonising.

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NOTES ON MIRCEA ELIADE'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROFILE: THE HISTORIAN OF RELIGIONS AS ANTHROPOLOGIST*

GHEORGHIȚĂ GEANĂ

ABSTRACT

An epistemological profile of Mircea Eliade is sketched starting from the echoes of his works in several domains. Mainly, Eliade is presented as mythologist, philosopher, and historian of religions. To these well-known facets one more is added: that of anthropologist. The argumentation is based, largely, on the special attention Eliade paid to "archaic" cultures, and especially on his Indian experience – here interpreted in the perspective of the comparative method and participant observation as principal methods of anthropology.

Keywords: Eliade, anthropology, religion, mythology, folklore, theology, epistemology.

ARGUMENT

By "epistemological profile" I understand from the beginning a set of traits that contribute together to the defining of a personality or domain from the perspective of the scientific knowledge.

In the case of Mircea Eliade, the difficulty of drawing such a profile is increased by the protean interests of this scholar, who from adolescence took such a titanic figure as B. P. Hasdeu[1] for his intellectual model. Moreover, the pluri-horizonal domain of religion is exposed *a priori* to the wide spectrum of a pluri-disciplinary approach: anthropological, ethnological, sociological, psychological,

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[1] Writer, historian, philologist, ethnologist, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu (1836–1907) was a Romanian scholar of European prestige in the nineteenth century – see *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1992, vol. 5, pp. 736–737. The young Eliade was fascinated by Hasdeu's overwhelming encyclopedic mind.

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philosophical, theological; when these spectral lines of knowledge are encompassed by a single mind, one may say that we are faced with a prodigious personality. Mircea Eliade is such indeed.

MIRCEA ELIADE AS MYTHOLOGIST, PHILOSOPHER, AND HISTORIAN OF RELIGIONS

Covering a long and influential career, the scientific activity of Mircea Eliade was analysed and put under several labels. A few among them were really significant, namely: *mythologist*, *philosopher*, and *historian of religions*. Some implications for theology have been alleged (T.J.J. Altizer, K. Hamilton, S.J. Reno – see Rennie 1999, pp. 211–214), but the arguments were too weak for adding also the label of theologian.

Mircea Eliade was called "mythologist" as a consequence of his interest in the theme of myth. Notable examples were produced by Aurel Martin (2007 [1982], p. 63) and Vasile Nicolescu (1978), this latter using even the encomiastic phrase *"marele mitolog"* [Romanian for "the great mythologist"] (*ibidem*, p. VIII). It is not accidental that both authors just mentioned had Romanian nationality and worked in Romania under the communist rule. They wrapped Eliade in the terminology of myth (and related terms) because every term related to religion was subjected to a severe censorship by representatives of the rulling ideological power, deeply rooted in materialistic, atheistic philosophy[2]. In this perspective, to speak about "myth" and "mythology", as against "religion", was more acceptable to the rhetoric of the totalitarian atheistic regime.

Eliade was also (and even more frequently) considered to be a *philosopher*. As Ioan Petru Culianu observed (2007 [1982], p. 116),

> "the fundamental meaning of Eliade's work is a philosophical one, namely to discover the components of a coherent *Weltanschauung* within the religious documents of humanity – especially of the archaic humanity –, as well as the way by which that *Weltanschauung* continues to be influential over the destiny of modern man".

Mainly, Eliade's work is one of *ontology*, and, generally speaking, ontology is the foundation of any philosophical system. One of his principal books, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (French orig.: *Traité d'histoire des religions*) is in fact a treatise on morphology of the sacred in which the universe is presented as an

[2] Vasile Nicolescu, a poet, held a high position in the hierarchy of the Consiliul Culturii şi Educaţiei Socialiste [Council of the Socialist Culture and Education]. In that context, one cannot pass over the strategy of the Communist regime (which already had turned to autochthonism) to retrieve the intellectual elite of the Romanian diaspora and integrate it in the national value system. And, obviously, Mircea Eliade was a bright name among those intellectuals.

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ensemble of "hierophanies"[3]. The components of this ensemble – domains like the stones, water, air, sky and stars, plants and trees, etc. – are nothing but what in phenomenological terms was called "ontological regions". As it is well known, Eliade's general outlook was associated with phenomenology. In this context, it is adequate to point out the observation made by one of many students of Eliade that "phenomenology itself is a *philosophical* methodology" (Beane 2001, p. 180 – italics in orig.). The same author titled a subchapter of his contribution "Eliade and the Historian of Religions as Philosopher" (*ibidem*, pp. 180–189).

In the attempt to sketch an epistemological profile of Eliade one may not ignore just Eliade's self-reflection. From all the masks available (if we may say so), the great scholar chose – apparently – the simplest one: that of *historian of religions*. This option is obvious, e.g., in his foreword to the first volume of the *History of Religious Ideas*, or in the letter to Ioan Petru Culianu, published in the front of the biography the addressee dedicated to the scholar[4]. Other authors detected also a self-identification of Eliade as historian of religions (see, for example, Reschika 2000, p. 59); Claude-Henri Rocquet presents this label as an "official way to identify him" (Rocquet 1978, p. 11).

As Eliade assumed it, the identity of historian of religions is really much more complex than appearances show. In his view, the sacred is always manifested in history. Nevertheless, in this pair of terms – history of religions – the emphasis should be put not on "history", but on "religion(s)". Eliade exhibited his dissatisfaction that, after a century of endeavours, the history of religions had not yet become a discipline, its data being still dissipated in anthropology, ethnology, sociology, religious psychology, and even in oriental studies (see Eliade 1994, p. 35). In 1959, i.e. three years after his appointment at the University of Chicago, he noted the following reflection which was relevant for his mood:

> "History of Religion is an impossible discipline: one have to know everything, to make inquiries into at least a dozen of auxiliary disciplines (from prehistory to folklore), to look always for sure sources and consult continuously all kind of specialists" (Eliade 1973, p. 274).

In his opinion, history of religions is able (and it is just this strategy that Eliade assumed) to articulate the adequate data of all those disciplines and, on this way, to constitute itself as an autonomous, *holistic discipline*.

Practically, it is difficult (if not even specious) to separate such facets that are syncretic by their nature – especially since they seem so when considered under the general (and generous) umbrella of philosophy. It is not accidental that Eliade's

[3] By the term "hierophany" Mircea Eliade designated the appearance (or embodiment) of the sacred (from Gr. *hieros* = "sacred", and *phaino* = "making something to appear").

[4] Eliade used the occasion to confess that whenever asked who had been his "master" (maître) and "model" of scientist, he answered: Raffaele Pettazzoni. Then he presented a few merits of Pettazzoni just as historian of religions (see Culianu, 1995, p. 8).

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identity can often be found (either explicitly or implicitly) under compound labels such as: "philosopher of myths" (Dumitrescu-Buşulenga 1967), "philosopher of religion" (Rennie 2001[5]), "philosophical anthropologist" (Culianu 1995, p. 131; *idem* 2007), "philosopher of culture" (Handoca 1983[6]), or "philosopher of history" (Bordaş 2008).

MIRCEA ELIADE AS ANTHROPOLOGIST

This epistemological profile is already complex but not yet complete. I am trying to enrich it by adding a new trait: that of *anthropologist*. Previously, one of the closest among Eliade's alumni defended his magister (and did it successfully) against the objections uttered by certain anthropologists such as Edmund Leach, Annemarie de Waal Malefijt et al. and suggested a plausible bridge between anthropology on the one hand and the history of religions on the other (Ricketts 1973). Ricketts was very persuasive in his plea, but the image of Eliade as anthropologist still remained to be drawn. It is just the goal of my present effort. The basis of my argument is the *epistemological matrix* that conditions the identity of a scientific discipline. As sketched by myself and applied to cultural anthropology (Geană 2005), such a matrix is made up of three basic components: (1) the *ontological condition*, (2) the *methodological condition*, and (3) the *conceptual condition*.

According to the ontological condition, a discipline should have an object of study of its own; this means that its "theoretical statements and applicative operations should cover a clearly determined class of phenomena, or should manifest itself within the latter a preferential regime towards some clearly determined aspects" (Geană 2005, p. 196). Similarly, the methodological condition presupposes that a discipline has specific (or preferentially used) methods. Finally, in conformity with the conceptual condition, a scientific discipline should possess a proper body of concepts, characterized by coherence and completeness (*ibidem*, pp. 196–197). The question is: How does anthropology satisfy these conditions, and how are they recognizable – with their anthropological specificity – in Eliade's scientific strategy? Let us take them successively.

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[5] Bryan Rennie offers a typical example of *implicit* labelling when writing: "Our discipline is a historical study, but so informed by the fluid construction of self-consistent world/systems that it must also be a philosophical study" (2001, p. 274), as well as: "There seems also to be a high degree of consensus on the return to philosophy in the study of religion. Our discipline is properly constituted as the history *and philosophy* of religion in which the data can only be properly processed in the self-consciousness of awareness of our own historical and philosophical situatedness" (*ibidem*, p. 280 – italics in orig.).

[6] In this article, Handoca demonstrates the intellectual affinity felt by Mircea Eliade toward the philosophy of Lucian Blaga (1895–1961). Poet and playwright, a classic of Romanian literature, Blaga was also the author of an outstanding philosophical system, in which the main part is taken up by philosophy of culture at the highest level of the European tradition.

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(1) From its dawn in the nineteenth century until the 1960s, the scientific discipline of anthropology was marked by a strong interest in the study of the so-called "primitive" cultures (or societies). James G. Frazer put this into a memorable formula when saying that "social anthropology is the embryology of human thought and institutions" (1913, p. 162). Even when it changed and opened itself towards the modern (rural and urban) communities, anthropology remained linked to the study of *other cultures*, as a way of keeping a kind of epistemological distance, in other words to insure objectivity (Beattie 1964). What about Mircea Eliade in this perspective?

It is beyond doubt that Eliade never ceased to deal with the "primitive" – better said "archaic" – cultures. Logically, as a historian, he had to begin with origins. More than that, by descending to the origins of phenomena, he came to see in the archaic cultures the *substratum and treasury of archetypal facts*, or, following his own interpretation, a universe of objects and behavioural acts that occured in primordial times and became models of behaviour continuously reiterated along historical time. This meaning of "archetype" (as developed in many of his writings, but especially in *Le mythe de l'éternel retour*) is proper to Eliade and is quite different from the meaning of this term in Jungian use. With Carl Gustav Jung, archetype is the inherited part of psyche, a structuring pattern of its activity (Samuels, Shorter & Plaut 2005, pp. 55–58). Eliade himself is aware of the difference: "For him [i.e. for Jung], the archetypes are structures of the collective unconscious; unlike him I used this word with reference to Plato and Saint Augustine" (Eliade 1978, p. 186). In short, while in Jung's outlook the archetype is a psychological concept, in Eliade's view this concept is foundational for the philosophy of history (see, for example, Eliade 1949, p. 11, where the author confesses that he would like to give the above mentioned book, with the idea of archetype at the core, the subtitle *Introduction à une Philosophie de l'Histoire*).

In addition to the *descensus ad origines*, Mircea Eliade was irresistibly attracted by India. In 1928 he complied with this fascination: he was 21 when, as a consequence of a request, benefited from a scholarship offered by a maharajah and went to Calcutta. The realm in which he plunged was an exotic one: very far from his native country and even on another continent. This was not a simple touristic adventure: the young Romanian intellectual was leaving the native country for studying Indian world view in the vernacular context. I wrote deliberately "world view" instead of "philosophy" because the first formula is closer to the anthropological meaning of the concept of "culture". Indeed, although his studies in Calcutta were carried on mainly within an academic framework and supervised by Professor Surendranath Dasgupta (who also offered personal accommodation to the neophyte), Eliade appropriated what he himself called the "eternal India" (Eliade 1991, p. 206), i.e. the whole tradition of Indian thought and spiritual folk practices. As he would confess later:

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"Dasgupta would prefer to see me concentrated on the history of yoga doctrine, or on the relationships among the classical Yoga, Vedanta, and Buddhism. I felt attracted, on the contrary, towards Tantrism and different forms of popular yoga, as I found them in folk epic, legends, and folklore" (*ibidem*, p. 193).

Thus, there is no reason to hesitate in reckoning Eliade's experience in India as a *fieldwork in other culture*, which, according to some contemporary authors, is the distinctive mark of anthropology within the larger domain of the socio-human sciences (see, for example, Hastrup 1993). Personally, I think that this distinctiveness is definitely blurred by the existence of a scale of *otherness* (Geană 1999) and cannot be accepted in an absolute manner. All the more so in that one can emphasize that Eliade satisfied the ontological condition in its fullest meaning.

(2) Ontological lines of Eliade's epistemological profile are favourably associated with the methodological lines. From the methodological viewpoint, anthropology is individualized by two core methods: cross-cultural comparison, and participant observation (Geană 2005, pp. 204–207).

Cross-cultural comparison is, in fact, the *comparative method*, constantly used by Eliade during the whole career. After the familiarization in adolescence with ancient Greek and Renaissance thought, he made it his personal programme to study "comparative philosophy" (Eliade 1991, p. 159). The Indian experience changed only partially this plan: during the whole experience the comparison between the Indian philosophy and the European one operated as a constant challenge for his mind. After a lecture of his master at the University of Calcutta, he noted: "Today D[asgupta] exceeded himself. He spoke about Candrakîrti's logic as compared with Kant's. He was admirable" (Eliade 1935, pp. 24–25). But what struck him was the difference in the way of learning: "Like European science, Indian philosophy is a technique; it is founded on experience and is learned not from books – as in Europe –, but from a teacher, as in European laboratories" (*ibidem*, p. 89).

Later on Eliade will make use of the comparative method as a historian of religions. And he did this with a clear theoretical consciousness. He reflected in his diary: "In the History of Religions, as in anthropology and the study of folklore, the function of comparison is to introduce the *universal element* into the 'local', 'provincial' research" (Eliade 1973, p. 539 – italics in orig.). Generally, Eliade did not launch into large speculative elaborations; usually, however, he accompanied the hermeneutical exercise over cultural facts with a few statements about the theoretical signification of his analytical inquiries. Here is such a statement from the "Avant-Propos" to the comparative studies on the religions of Dacia and Oriental Europe: "[A]s the signification of a belief or religious behaviour does not unfold itself but in the light of comparisons, I have not hesitated to put the documents [i.e. the cultural facts – my note, G.G.] into the perspective of the general history of religions" (Eliade 1970, p. 10). It is in this perspective that the

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author interpreted such facts as the ethnic name of Dacians, cult of Zalmoxis, cosmogonic myth among Romanians, etc. And one of the most important results of this method as used by him was the revelation of "cosmic religiosity", an element of

> "unity among all the peasant civilizations, ranging from China and South-East Asia to Mediterranean Sea and Portugal. Everywhere I was rediscovering what later on I would call 'cosmic religiosity', that is the essential role of the symbol and icon, the religious respect for earth and life, the belief that the sacred shows itself directly by the mystery of fecundity and cosmic renewal, and not by historical events" (Eliade 1991, p. 221).

Still more interesting in the context of the present approach seems to be Mircea Eliade's position toward the method of *participant observation*. As it is well known (and I have already mentioned), the young Eliade travelled from Romania to India in order to study the traditional philosophy of this country. As a matter of fact, what happened to him was *a genuine experience of participant observation*. This is not a simple impression, but an affirmation available of being validated by the standards of the participant observation. As I pointed out on another occasion (Geană 2005, pp. 204–206), professional anthropologists established that this method consists in three main requirements to be fulfilled by a researcher in the field, namely: (a) to learn the vernacular language, i.e. the language of the people under study, (b) to share the way of life of those people by assuming some roles in their group, and (c) to stay amongst them, in the field, at least one year, this being the interval of time proper to a cultural cycle. Let us begin with the last-mentioned requirement and say that Mircea Eliade remained in India three years. His memoirs on this period[7] are very rich in data exploitable from the perspective of participant observation. In the first part of the period, he dedicated not less than twelve hours daily to learn Sanskrit[8]! During the discipleship with Professor Dasgupta he learned to eat with his fingers like the natives, attended a wedding in Bengalese clothes, and was not exempted from anxiety like any other ethnographer in the field research.

In the second part of the Indian sojourn, Eliade lived in two Hindu monasteries (Hardwar[9] and Rishikesh), wore ascetics' robe and sandals, ate their

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[7] I have in view especially *Şantier* ([Work in Progress], 1935), but also many data about this period can be found in *Memorii* (*Autobiography*, 2 vols, 1981, 1988), *L'épreuve du labyrinthe* (1978) etc. In Romanian, *şantier* mens "work site". The suggestion to translate *şantier* by "work in progress" is due to Culianu (1995 [1978], p. 36), and the book with this title is a writing essentially similar to Bronislaw Malinowski's *Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (1967).

[8] It is true that Sanskrit was not a living language, but the task of Eliade when going to India was mainly philosophical, or in any case not ethnographically oriented. The object of his attention was not the language of an actual social group, but the language of a culture. Even if ancient, it was assimilated by Eliade in anthropological manner, i.e. as *another* culture.

[9] The variant Haridwar may be found in some sources. Nevertheless, the form Hardwar was adopted not only by Eliade but also by *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

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vegetarian food. Even the love with a native girl did not remain alien to him. The girl was Dasgupta's daughter, Maitreyi. When returned in Romania, Eliade narrated the story of this love in the novel with the same title – *Maitreyi* –, a real and perennial best-seller. Although initially this love was not a part of the research strategy, finally it appeared as a part significantly integrated into the whole experience. In conformity with Eliade's confession, the erotic moments with Maitreyi, tantrism, and frescos he admired in the Buddhist temple of Ajanta must be considerated together, as three unitary elements (Eliade 1978, pp. 54–55). Even the relationship with Dasgupta, suddenly broken when the master discovered the hidden love between his daughter and his disciple, evolved according to a mysterious plan:

> "Later on I understood that even my drama followed a traditional model: my relations with Dasgupta had to go beyond the phase of innocence and facility for entering the phase of tension and clashes which characterizes the beginning of relations between a *guru* and his disciple. (...) Although he had driven me out with cruelty from Bhowanipore, Dasgupta would recognize me one day as his true disciple – however, this would happen on another level, *in aeternum* and not *in saeculum*" (Eliade 1991, p. 206).

(3) One must accept that, from the viewpoint of the conceptual condition, our attempt to draw a portrait of Mircea Eliade as anthropologist is no longer supported as until now with an infallible argumentative force. Indeed, none of the three basic concepts of the scientific cultural anthropology – culture, personality, and social structure – could be identified as such in Eliade's writings. First of all, Eliade was neither a sociologist, nor a psychologist in the disciplinary meaning of the terms. His hermeneutics does not pay special attention to the understanding of cultural facts in the social-structural framework, and it does not submerge in psychological analyses either. As to the concept of *culture*, this appears in its philosophical meaning rather than in the anthropological one. In philosophy, the term "culture" is used – explicitly or implicitly – with reference to the creative capabilities of human being. Unlike this, in anthropology the emphasis falls on the behavioural meaning. Nevertheless, the anthropological meaning of this concept is always and everywhere present in Eliade's prodigious work in so far as the scholar does not take culture for a privilege of the so-called "civilized" people. If so, how to solve the problem of creativity? Simply, it manifests itself not only in the activity of civilized people but equally in the one of primitives. This allows Eliade to speak – with most natural and anthropological rhetoric – about the "archaic cultures". In this respect, Rennie (1999, pp. 245–248) is very suggestive with his comments about the "ontological imagination" of the religious (particularly archaic) mind as it has been revealed by Eliade's hermeneutics.

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CONCLUSIONS

At the end of these considerations, I think it sufficient to recall the words of one of the most authorized analysts of Eliade's life and works: "The objection brought against Eliade by anthropologists and others in later years – that his theories do not merit their attention because he is an ivory tower savant who has never had first-hand contact with those things about which he writes – loses most of its force in view of Eliade's three-year immersion in Indian life" (Ricketts 1988, I, p. 363). This assertion reiterates conclusively Ricketts' argumentation from one of his previous (and highly documented) intervention (1973[10]).

I want to underline that the present article is not another pro-Mircea Eliade defence against the critics of his ideas. If my text is read as a contribution in itself (and I hope to be read so), two specifications should be made, starting from Ricketts' words. First, the objection of anthropologists loses not "most" but *whole* of its force, and, secondly, the anthropological touch in Eliade's epistemological profile results not only from scholar's Indian experience but from his whole thought.

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[10] This article by Ricketts, *In Defence of Eliade*, is of a peculiar importance: it mentions (analytically) the reviews of Eliade's writings in such influential journals as "American Anthropologist", "Man" (Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute), etc.

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BRANCUSI : L'ENSEMBLE DE TÂRGU-JIU. UNE APPROCHE D'ANTHROPOLOGIE SYMBOLIQUE

MATEI STÎRCEA-CRĂCIUN

RESUMÉ

Interpréter l'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu, chef-d'œuvre de Constantin Brancusi, avec des instruments d'analyse propres à l'anthropologie symbolique, tel est le but de cette étude qui vise, d'un côté, à rendre compte de la complexité somptueuse des métaphores plastiques brancusiennes et, de l'autre côté, de prouver l'efficacité d'une démarche – l'herméneutique anthropologique – insuffisamment exploitée par la critique d'art, l'histoire de l'art aussi bien que par d'autres domaines assignés à la recherche culturologique de l'objet.

L'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu fut érigé, à la commande de la Ligue des femmes de Gorj, à la mémoire des soldats roumains tombés au cours de combats de la Grande Guerre. L'étude interprète la *Porte du Baiser* dans les termes d'une double métaphore matièriste (hylésique) qui corrobore et explique de façon éloquente les professions de foi de l'artiste sur la nécessité de faire respecter dans la sculpture « le language des matières ».

Une seconde section de l'étude traîte de la dimension allégorique de la *Table du Silence*, un avatar tardif, il est soutenu, d'un projet monumental abandonné, La traversée de la Mer Rouge.

Les considérations supplémentaires réservées aux autres éléments de l'ensemble (Allée des clepsydres, Voie des âmes des héros, *Colonne infinie* en dégagent les lois de construction tout en soulignant le caractère unitaire du discours symbolique brancusien.

Mots clefs : Brancusi (Brâncuşi), Ensemble de Târgu-Jiu, *Porte du Baiser*, *Table du Silence*, *Colonne infinie*, anthropologie symbolique, herméneutique, matièrisme.

INTRODUCTION

C'est le lit sempiternel de la rivière du Jiu, dressé du Nord au Sud, que Brancusi choisit, à Târgu-Jiu, comme point de départ pour l'axe de l'ensemble de monuments qu'il érigea à la mémoire des soldats roumains tombés au cours des combats de la Grande Guerre : la *Table du Silence* entourée des douze chaises rondes, puis l'allée bordée des chaises carrées débouchant sur la *Porte du Baiser* et, tout à l'autre bout de la ville, la *Colonne infinie*[1].

[1] *La Table du Silence* et les douze chaises rondes qui l'entourent aussi bien que les trentes chaises carrées bordant l'allée du parc plus les deux bancs en pierre du côté de la *Porte du Baiser* furent exécutées, suivant les indications de l'artiste, par la Société "Pietroasa" de la ville de Deva – cf. Barbu Brezianu, *Brâncuşi în România* [*Brancusi en Roumanie*], Editura ALL ,1998, pp. 170–174.

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Comme plusieurs auteurs l'ont souligné, le projet du sculpteur faisait inclure la ville, à titre d'élément fonctionnel, au sein de l'ensemble. La couronne des rues et des ruelles de Târgu-Jiu se vit, de par son intervention, enrichie d'une voie nouvelle, parfaitement rectiligne, la *Voie des âmes des héros,* dressée vers la flèche de la *Colonne infinie*, avec sans doute pour but d'ordonner la ville, de la faire subordonner, dans sa finalité et ses fonctionnalités multiples, à un ordre supérieur – celui précisément qu'impose l'horizon d'une ampleur sans égal de l'art. Il n'y a point d'exagération dans l'assertion qu'à Târgu-Jiu, Brancusi bouleverse les conventions de l'art destinées à l'espace publique. Au lieu de placer le monument dans la ville, c'est bien la ville qu'il place au cœur du monument.

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Il ne fait pas de doute que l'exégèse de l'ensemble se doit de commencer par la *Porte du Baiser*, ne serait-ce que puisqu'elle ouvre la visite de l'ensemble et que son moindre degré d'abstraction, par rapport aux autres éléments de ce projet monumental, lui confère expressément le rôle de définir les prémisses symboliques de l'ensemble et, par là, d'en venir à préciser le cadre du discours plastique.

LA PORTE DU BAISER (1938)

"*La Porte* (*du Baiser*), note le sculpteur William Tucker, est superbe. Elle conserve la fraîcheur du premier *Baiser* et sa structure simple amène dans l'histoire du motif du *Baiser* un progrès d'égal poix que la version initiale de 1907, surgie comme d'un néant, d'une façon unique dans l'œuvre de Brancusi"[2].

Pour concevoir la *Porte du Baiser*, Brancusi pouvait garder à l'esprit, au nombre des répères plastiques susceptibles de l'inspirer, par exemple, *Les Portes du Paradis* (1425) de Lorenzo Ghiberti aussi bien que *La Porte de l'Enfer* (1880-1917) de Rodin. Les hypostases extrêmes d'utilisation d'un objet en dévoilent parfois le mieux les fonctions définitoires. Or, voilà, on réalise mieux, lorsqu'il s'agit de portes censées ouvrir l'accès soit au paradis, soit aux enfers, que toute porte a finalement pour but premier de diviser l'espace. La porte équivaut à une frontière. Elle coupe l'espace (l'espace comme entier), en deux parties, ce qui revient, à la limite, à dire qu'elle convertit *un* en *deux*[3].

Cette première observation appelle, de façon inattendue la possibilité d'opposer, sous le rapport de leurs finalités respectives, la notion de *porte* à la notion de *baiser*. Car, en effet, le baiser réunit. Il correspond à l'acte par lequel

[2] William Tucker, *The Language of Sculpture,* Thames and Hudson, 1974, p. 136.

[3] Adrian Petringenaru note, "...*la porte* est, dans un sens immédiat, ouverture vers quelque chose, passage d'un territoire vers un autre territoire. Le plus souvent elle est passage d'un espace plus large, (commun) à tous ou à personne vers un espace plus étroit, d'un espace qui peut être désert et inanimé vers un espace où il y a quelqu'un, qui abrite la vie". – cf. Adrian Petringenaru, *Imagine şi simbol la Brâncuşi* [Image et symbole chez Brancusi], Meridiane, 1983, p. 86.

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deux êtres fusionnent. Pour garder la symétrie entre les définitions, par l'acte du baiser *deux* se voit converti en *un*.

Auquel cas, il apparaît encore que le titre, *la Porte du Baiser*, se veut désigner une composition inspirée par un système paradoxal d'équations: *"un devient deux"* conjugué à *"deux devient un"*.

*

La Porte du Baiser, comme il fut souligné par divers auteurs, mélange des éléments prêtés, d'une part, à la série du *Baiser* inaugurée en 1907, et, d'autre part, à *la Colonne du Baiser*, réalisée plus tard et destinée au *Temple de l'Amour*[4]. Il convient d'ignorer, pour l'instant, l'argument que la seconde source d'inspiration dérive de la première. Car, la prise en compte de deux sources d'inspiration conjuguées, plutôt qu'une seule, ouvre une voie incitante d'approcher la paire d'équations associables au titre de la composition.

"Je ne donne jamais le premier coup à la pierre, avouait Brancusi, avant qu'elle ne m'ait dit ce que je dois faire. J'attends jusqu'à ce que l'image intérieure a bien pris contour dans mon esprit. Cela prend parfois plusieurs semaines que la pierre me parle... "[5].

Les dimensions et la forme brute du bloc de pierre présentaient bien moins d'intérêt pour l'artiste que la spécificité matérielle de la pierre, porteuse de vérités premières, qui, tôt ou tard, dans la civilisation urbaine, sombrent dans l'oubli. "La matière (...), précisait encore l'artiste, doit suggérer le sujet et la forme. Les deux doivent venir de l'intérieur de la pierre et ne pas lui être imposés du dehors"[6].

Lorque l'on se donne le temps pour une paisible réflexion, il devient facile de s'aviser, qu'à l'échelle des grands processus géologiques, la pierre s'identifie à la matière fondamentale dont se constituent non seulement les versants rocheux des montagnes, mais la planète toute entière. Comme ce sont même les continents et les océans terrestres qui s'appuient sur de gigantesques plaques minérales, il n'y a point d'exagération à considérer que le chiffre *un* de la numérologie, celui où tout se contient et dont tout procède, se laisse singulièrement bien illustrer, pour la conscience humaine, par la substance de la pierre[7].

Les quarantes paires du *Baiser* qui font le pourtour du linteau développent la formule primaire du motif du *Baiser* dans le sens précisément où les paires étalées sur chaque côté du linteau réitèrent de façon cumultative l'équation *deux devient un*. En effet, les côtés étroits du linteau présentent quatre couples du *Baiser*, alors que sur les côtés larges il y en a seize, ce qui fait un total de quarente couples. Les

[4] Le même motif se retrouve sur une colonne haute de trois mètres, datée 1930 – cf. Sanda Miller, *Constantin Brancusi, A Survey of His Work*, Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 209 esq.

[5] Petre Pandrea, *Brâncuşi, amintiri şi exegeze* [Brancusi, souvenirs et exégèses], Meridiane, 1976, p. 88.

[6] M.M., *Constantin Brancusi, A Summary of Many Conversations*, The Arts, vol. IV, No. 1, July 1923; pp. 16-17.

[7] G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophie de la nature*, Paris, 1864, tome 2, p. 382.

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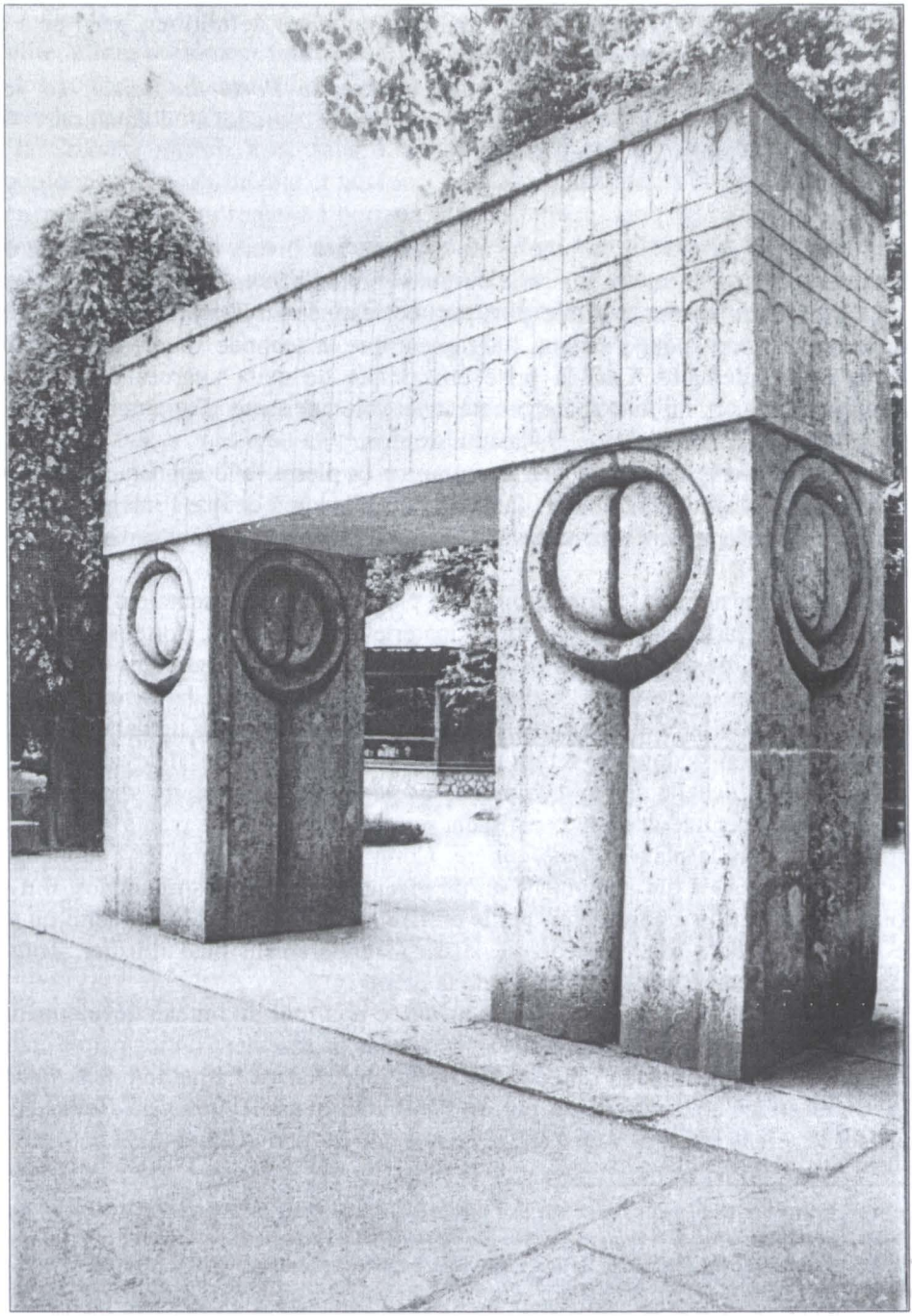

Porte du Baiser, 1937, Pierre de Banpotoc.

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assertions plastiques sous-jacentes aux fragments de la frise aussi bien qu'à l'ensemble de la frise se laissent donc lire comme : *quatre devient un* (les quatre motifs forment *un* côté court), respectivement *seize devient un* (les seize motifs forment *un* côté long), ou encore *quarante devient un* (les quarantes motifs forment *une* frise). On peut voir comment la métaphore des couples enlacés sur le linteau fait raisonner pour l'artiste le principe de la genèse de la pierre à partir des grains de sable – le thème de la solidarité humaine fondée sur l'amour, Brancusi la commente dans les termes de l'additivité des particules minérales au sein du bloc minéral.

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L'encoche verticale dont le corps de la *Colonne du Baiser* est marqué sur toute sa longueur paraît illustrer un autre attribut hylésique[8] de la pierre : sous le choque, la pierre se fend. Il importe d'observer qu'il s'agit cette fois d'un attribut de valeur complémentaire à celui précédemment évoqué, en parlant du linteau de la *Porte du Baiser*. Plutôt que l'équation *"deux* devient *un"*, le motif de l'encoche se veut manifestement illustrer l'équation inverse : *"un* devient *deux"*.

Rien de plus facile, pour Brancusi, que de traduire dans la langue de la sculpture la faculté de la pierre de se fendre, mais la tâche suppléméntaire qu'il lui incombait de résoudre revenait à identifier, dans le répértoire des arts plastiques, un énoncé susceptible de le corroborer dans le registre des thèmes de la culture, notamment pour rendre ainsi plus aisément répérable aux yeux du public la symbiose nature-culture qu'il entendait servir explicitement par son art.

Sans doute l'artiste accordait-il une valeur symbolique au motif qui illustre les quatre faces de la *Colonne du Baiser*. La fente verticale qui parcourt les piliers vient intersecter, dans le registre supérieur, un médaillon inscrit par un anneau bien visible, sculpté en haut relief. La fente, le médaillon et l'anneau sont circonscrits par un mince rectangle qui borde les piliers sur toute leurs surfaces.

Partout dans le monde, il est courant que les piliers des temples, des portes, voire des maisons, se voient attribuer des formes anthropomorphiques. Il n'est donc point surprenant de retrouver la silhouette humaine figurée sur les piliers de *la Porte du Baiser* ; pourtant, Brancusi a recourts à une optique délibérément réductive, puisqu'il y évoque le thème humain par le simple contour stylisé d'un corps humain – nous faisons référence ici à la mince bordure rectangulaire au sommet arrondi qui encadre les motifs sculptés sur les piliers[9].

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[8] La symbolisation hylésique désigne certaines modalités d'expression plastique qui utilisent la matière comme matrice de la forme signifiante. Aussi, dans l'hypostase hylésique, la matière parvient-elle à caractériser, au titre de vecteur axiologique, le sujet de l'oeuvre d'art. – cf. Matei Stîrcea-Crăciun, *Brâncuşi – Simbolismul hylesic* [Brancusi – Le symbolisme hylésique], Edinter, 1992, p. 72 ; Idem, *Paul Neagu – Nine Catalytic Stations; A Study in Hylesic Symbolism*, Anastasia Publishing House, 2003, p. 24.

[9] Les couples rectangulaires amassés dans leur candide enfilade tout autour du linteau confirment, au-délà de tout équivoque, que la forme rectangulaire s'y veut comme emblématique de la silhouette humaine.

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A ce propos, pour rendre son plein sens à l'idéogramme humaine ainsi inscrite sur les piliers, peut-être l'élément à ajouter devait-il symboliser ce qui dépasse la corporalité en tant que telle. Et alors, on peut supposser que les médaillons ronds, plutôt qu'un simulacre anthropomorphique, définissent une convention graphique : en effet, la géométrie olympienne du cercle ne se prête-t-elle pas à merveille pour articuler une emblème plastique de l'âme – intarrissable ressource de beauté humaine que Brancusi consacra tout sa vie à élogier ?

L'artiste conjugue à dessein, sur les piliers de la *Porte de Baiser*, des formes antithétiques – le motif rectangulaire vs. le motif circulaire – parce qu'il tient à définir ainsi les deux pôles complémentaires de l'être humain, le *corps* et *l'âme*, et la façon dont ils sont, les deux, solidaires lorsque la destinée inflige à l'individu l'épreuve du sacrifice.

En outre, il n'est pas sans intérêt de relever comment le style en contrepoint dont l'artiste se sert pour sculpter les piliers nuance d'avantage les mêmes idées, y ajoute des accents d'intensité, fait hiérarchiser les significations. En effet, Brancusi réserve le bas-relief pour le rectangle, alors qu'il recourt au haut-relief pour rendre le médaillon et la fente verticale. Autrement dit, c'est comme s'il mettait à dessein la sourdine au discours sur la corporalité (le rectangle), dont *la Porte du Baiser* n'offre que des illustrations épidermiques sur les piliers aussi bien que sur le linteau, pour ainsi mieux exalter le thème cardinal de la composition, le discours sur *l'âme* (le médaillon circulaire) et sur l'héroisme (la fente verticale qui feint de fendre la pierre des piliers).

A tous ceux ayant fait au combat le sacrifice de leur vie, la *Porte du Baiser* adresse l'éloge pérenne de la pierre qui se fend. Le parallèle entre la destinée des hommes et des pierres est censée assumer ici des vertues consolatrices. A l'instar de la grote – le vide de matière, qui, en parfaite symbiose avec le rocher qui l'abrite, partage la gloire de pérénité de la pierre – la mort des héros s'installe, présence indélébile, dans l'horizon de la mémoire collective, comme un substitut d'immortalité. Et le plus significatif des détails, la verticalité inflexible de la fente qui marque les piliers de la *Porte du Baiser* rend hommage à la *verticalité* devant la mort, l'avatar suprême du courage et de la dignité humaine.

LA TABLE DU SILENCE

L'ensemble érigé par Brancusi à Târgu-Jiu mérite de l'appellation de chef d'œuvre à plus d'un titre : ce projet monumental n'a pas, en tant que tel, d'équivalent parmi les compositions antérieures du maître ; son importance culturelle se voit rehaussée d'autant par le poids historique du sujet abordé ; mais, ce qui compte plus, l'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu couronne les tentatives de Brancusi de rendre compte du bien fondé de sa vision esthétique centrée sur la mise en exergue des matières en tant que ... "thème" inaliénable de la sculpture. "Chaque matière,

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notait l'artiste, a son individualité propre que nous ne pouvons pas détruire à notre guise, mais lui faire parler sa propre langue"[10].

Il se trouve que pour bien comprendre la portée esthétique exceptionnelle des réflexions du sculpteur sur le statut de signification des matières dans la composition plastique, l'exégèse de l'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu fournit des éléments clefs.

En effet, l'ensemble se distingue, par rapport à toute autre composition brancusienne par l'effort de cerner, à un registre sur-individuel, les injonctions spécifiques de la pierre (*la Table du Silence, la Porte du Baiser, l'Allée de clepsydres*) et respectivement du métal (*la Colonne infinie*). Et cela précisément dans le sens où ces injonctions se laissent traduire en normes éthiques voire même esthétiques impregnées de façon indélébile au mental collectif d'une culture donnée. Il importe de souligner cette assertion. La sagesse communiquée par les matières, notamment au sujet du bien et du mal, du beau et du laid gagne, pour être appréhendée, du registre du monumental.

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Les travaux pour l'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu, commandés par Arethia Tatarasco au nom de la Ligue des femmes de Gorj, avaient trait à la *Colonne de la reconnaissance infinie* et au *Portail* en pierre. Brancusi allait compléter par la suite cette première version du projet de l'ensemble, puisqu'il lui ajoute la *Table du Silence* et l'allée des clepsydres (l'allée du parc bordée de chaises carrées en pierre)[11]. Sur la base de ce détail concernant la genèse de l'ensemble, certains exégètes distinguent la section comprise entre *la Table du Silence* et la *Porte du Baiser* comme entité autonome par rapport à la première section, comprise entre la *Porte du Baiser* et la *Colonne infinie*. Et, en effet, il est possible de montrer que, par la *Table du Silence* et l'allée des chaises-clepsydre, l'artiste se donnait pour tâche de configurer une nouvelle métaphore plastique, ajoutée en supplément à celle qu'il avait imaginée d'abord.

La Table du Silence est posée à dessein à proximité de la rivière du Jiu comme pour prévenir discrètement le visiteur que c'est bien la rivière qui ouvre le trajet de l'ensemble, puisqu'elle le convie qu'il s'approche et la contemple.

La définition hylésique de l'eau de rivière y voit une matière sans ... bout, dépourvue de point de commencement. Car le fil d'eau se forme au cœur de la montagne, quelque part loin de l'endroit où la rivière fait surface sur un versant. Et si le visiteur consent à l'idée que le Jiu fait effectivement partie de l'ensemble, il lui sera facile de réaliser que c'est en raison de ce que si, du côté de la *Colonne,* l'ensemble se déclare "infini", du côté de la rivière – et par son truchement –, il se proclame l'être autant.

[10] Doina Lemny, Cristian-Robert Velescu, *Brâncuşi inedit* [Brancusi inédit], Humanitas, 2004, p. 60 esq.

[11] Cf. Barbu Brezianu, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

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Table du Silence, 1937, Pierre de Banpotoc.

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Le trajet de l'ensemble commence au parc de la ville, dont l'accès se fait à travers *la Porte du Baiser*. Le visiteur traverse *la Porte* et, par la suite, arpente l'allée des clepsydres pour venir s'arrêter devant *la Table du Silence*[12].

Dans le tambour généreux de la *Table* palpite les énergies agglutinantes de la pierre. Voici les chaises disposées autour de *la Table*. On peut y prendre place, mais la *Table* reste trop éloignée pour permettre que l'on s'en serve à des fins utilitaires, par exemple, pour y manger. Le visiteur sent comme une envie irrésistible de s'asseoir à la *Table du Silence*. C'est une expérience nécessaire qui rappelle, dans un certain sens, une étape à franchir dans un rituel d'initiation.

Il suffit de quelques instants passés sur les chaises au contour rond, dans la proximité, à la fois avenante et distante de la *Table du Silence*. On se relève instinctivement, sous l'impression vaguement coupable d'avoir commis une inadvertance. C'est à peine à ce moment que l'on réalise clairement que « les chaises » ne sont pas conçues pour offrir du repos, qu'elles récusent nettement tout statut utilitaire, qu'elles induisent, au fait, une ségrégation entre le vécu au présent et le vécu dans le mode historique et poétique.

[12] Il incombera aux futurs projets de restauration de l'ensemble de rouvrir l'accès des visiteurs jusqu'aux berges du Jiu.

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Pour l'artiste originaire d'un village de la région du Gorj, la commande de la Ligue des Femmes du Gorj, l'hommage qu'elles vouaient aux soldats tombés au combat – maris, fils, frères, parents, en majeur partie des gens simples, dépourvues d'instruction, dont la dernière pensée, au moment suprême, aura été de confier leur âme à la grâce divine –, pour l'artiste familier de l'univers de coutumes et croyances des villages roumains, la commande du monument à la gloire des héros supposait, comme un geste obligatoire de piété, le recours à un langage pleinement accessible à la fois aux disparus aussi bien qu'à leurs familles.

Il convient de faire mention ici des efforts notables, dûs aux générations antérieures de chercheurs roumains, de faire raccorder l'imaginaire brancusien, tout spécialement celui sous-jacent à l'allégorie de l'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu, au primordial agreste de la culture roumaine. Quelques noms d'érudits méritent tout spécialement d'être rappellés, encore que la liste complète soit considérablement plus longue: Petre Pandrea, Petru Comarnescu, V. G. Paleolog, Ionel Jianu, Adrian Petringenaru, Tretie Paleolog ou, plus récemment Nina Stănculescu.

L'exégèse ethnocentrique s'est souvent centrée sur le folklore roumain, dont elle s'est plue à en venter la nature singulière et originelle, pour expliquer ainsi la force et les élans de la création brancusienne. Mais, alors que la civilisation rurale roumaine se revendique simultanément de deux fondements axiologiques – dont l'un est païen, l'autre chrétien – nos études ont tenté de prouver comment le sculpteur s'en prévale d'avantage du second[13].

En sorte que, si une certaine dimension paysanne de l'art de Brancusi est convaincante tout autant pour le public de Roumanie ou de partout ailleurs, c'est en raison notamment du fait que l'artiste entend s'en servir pour se déclarer citoyen du monde.

Il ne fait pas de doute que, dans la bourgade isolée et provinciale de Târgu-Jiu, l'hommage novateur de l'art moderne brancusien se devait de prendre appui et d'honorer les traditions et les coutumes locales.

Pourtant, lorsqu'il parle en langue chrétienne, Brancusi ne répète pas une prière, il en compose une. Et la prière qu'il prononce, en 1938, à la mémoire des combattants disparus le situe pleinement, en temps et espace, en tant que citoyen du XX-ème siècle.

Dans les premières années de sa carière, alors qu'il concevait les allégories sculpturales, *la Sagesse de la Terre, le Baiser* et *la Prière,* dont le symbolisme renvoie conjointement, comme nous l'avons montré ailleurs, à la légende biblique sur Adam et Eve[14], le sculpteur avait en chantier le modelage en plâtre du groupe colossal *La traversée de la Mer Rouge*, également inspiré des légendes de l'Ancien Testament.

[13] Matei Stîrcea-Crăciun, *Brâncuşi – Simbolismul hylesic* [Brancusi – Le symbolisme hylésique], ibid, pp. 11–89.

[14] *Ibidem*, pp. 11–28.

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Cette dernière composition allait bientôt être détruite par l'artiste, dont il englobera les fragments dans la première *Table* – en roumain, *table* se traduit *masa* (à lire comme 'massa'), pièce à l'apparence strictement utilitaire, constamment maintenue dans l'espace de l'atelier, comme une présence nécessaire.

Mais voici que, trois décennies plus tard, le motif de la *masa* resurgit au premier plan de l'attention, puisqu'il se retrouve articulé au chef d'œuvre de Târgu-Jiu.

Le remise en faveur de ce thème n'est pas sans acquérir dans ce cas une dimension spectaculaire. Car c'est bien le projet abandonné, *la Traversée de la Mer Rouge,* travesti en un dernier avatar, *la Table (Masa) du Silence*, qui vient revendiquer ainsi un statut de centralité au niveau de l'imaginaire brancusien.

En effet, *la Table du Silence* conjuguée, à Târgu-Jiu, à *la Porte du Baiser*, met en évidence une possible congruence originaire du motif de *la Traversée de la Mer Rouge* avec le motif *du Baiser* et, partant, avec le triptyque de sculptures de 1907 qui gouverne pratiquement l'émergence de tous les motifs cardinaux dans l'œuvre brancusien[15]. Or cela prouve, pour ce qui est de *la Table du Silence,* que son symbolisme se réclame encore de l'Ancien Testament, à l'instar du triptyque de 1907 et, de toute évidence, à l'instar du projet abandonné, *la Traversée de la Mer Rouge.*

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Il n'y a que peu de textes capables d'égaler le lyrisme sévère des légendes vétéro-testamentaires lorsque sont évoqués l'affranchissement des Hébreux de l'esclavage d'Egypte, la traversée de la Mer Rouge et le pèlerinage, durant quarante années, dans le désert de Sinaï, en quête du pays de Canaan.

Comment s'imaginer encore aujourd'hui, tout un peuple, non pas seulement une armée de soldats, errer dans le désert, des décennies durant, parmi les dunes stériles de sable ? Comment s'imaginer, à part les hommes, la foule sans nombre de femmes, d'enfants, de vieillards, se nourrissant de la rosée du ciel, miraculeusement transformée pour eux, à chaque levée de soleil, en pain ? Comment les imaginer s'avançant non pas dans une direction clairement arrêtée, mais les yeux rivés sur un nuage qui, dans la journée, les guidait alors que, la nuit, transformé en pilier de flammes, il les protégéait contre tout danger ?[16]

Brancusi aura trouvé opportun de raconter à nouveau ces fabuleuses légendes, mais de le faire comme s'il s'agissait d'un nouveau conte. Et cela notamment puisqu'il avait surtout à l'esprit de greffer au filon noble du mythe la trame de la chronique roumaine de la Grande Guerre, en un geste d'hommage à la mémoire des combattants disparus.

[15] Il s'agit de la conclusion à laquelle aboutit notre étude monographique, en cours de parution : *Brancusi – le langage des matières, Une approche herméneutique de l'art abstrait.*

[16] Voici en quelques lignes un résumé des éléments fantastiques de la légende.

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Il est possible de spéculer au sujet du projet abandonné, la *Traversée de la Mer Rouge*, que, pareillement à toute autre composition majeure brancusienne, l'artiste y voulait développer « une forme-clef où l'idée du sujet soit résumée avec force.»[17]

Il lui aurait notamment suffit, pour ce faire, de méditer aux versets les plus denses de l'Ancien Testament sur l'exode des Hébreux hors de l'Egypte. Or, il se trouve que, du fait de la brièveté relative des textes bibliques, la tâche d'identifier les passages cruciaux dans le déroulement de la légende s'avère très aisée:

Toi, lève ta verge, étends ta main sur la mer, et fends-la; et les enfants d'Israël entreront au milieu de la mer à sec(...)

Moïse étendit sa main sur la mer. Et l'Éternel refoula la mer par un vent d'orient, qui souffla avec impétuosité toute la nuit; il mit la mer à sec, et les eaux se fendirent.

Les enfants d'Israël entrèrent au milieu de la mer à sec, et les eaux formaient comme une muraille à leur droite et à leur gauche.

Exode, 14: 16, 21, 22.

Dans la lecture du sculpteur, les eaux bordant à l'instar d'une muraille la voie ouverte à travers la mer pouvaient assumer la signification d'une insolite métamorphose matérielle (hylésique). En effet, lorsque le texte biblique affirme qu'au plan d'eau il se substitue une voie sèche et que l'agitation incontinente de la masse liquide contenue dans l'abysse de la mer se fait remplacer par la froide immobilité de murs cristallins d'eau, il est bien permis de conclure que le thème dont il est question a trait à la métamorphose de l'eau en pierre.

Cependant, la traversée du désert de Sinaï comporte un autre épisode significatif à ce propos, puisqu'il a pour objet non pas l'eau muée en pierre, mais la pierre muée en eau. Et la Bible, il importe de le souligner, réserve à cet autre miracle une importance sans égal par rapport à l'ensemble des aventures de l'Exode:

Toute l'assemblée des enfants d'Israël arriva dans le désert de Tsin le premier mois, et le peuple s'arrêta à Kadès. C'est là que mourut Marie, et qu'elle fut enterrée.

Il n'y avait point d'eau pour l'assemblée; et l'on se souleva contre Moïse et Aaron (...)

Moïse et Aaron s'éloignèrent de l'assemblée pour aller à l'entrée de la tente d'assignation. Ils tombèrent sur leurs visages; et la gloire de l'Éternel leur apparut.

L'Éternel parla à Moïse, et dit:

[17] Şirianu Vintilă Ursu, *Ore petrecute cu George Enescu, Constantin Brâncuşi, Panait Istrati...* [Des heures passées en compagnie de George Enesco, Constantin Brancusi, Panait Istrati...], Bucureşti, Editura pentru Literatură, 1969, p. 42.

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Prends la verge, et convoque l'assemblée, toi et ton frère Aaron. Vous parlerez en leur présence au rocher, et il donnera ses eaux; tu feras sortir pour eux de l'eau du rocher, et tu abreuveras l'assemblée et leur bétail.

Moïse prit la verge qui était devant l'Éternel, comme l'Éternel le lui avait ordonné.

Moïse et Aaron convoquèrent l'assemblée en face du rocher. Et Moïse leur dit: Écoutez donc, rebelles! Est-ce de ce rocher que nous vous ferons sortir de l'eau?

Puis Moïse leva la main et frappa deux fois le rocher avec sa verge. Il sortit de l'eau en abondance. L'assemblée but, et le bétail aussi.

Nombres 20: 1,2,6,7,8,11.

En effet, le livre de l'Exode ne comporte aucun épisode qui fasse un réel contrepoids, en termes de dramatisme, à celui qui se déroule dans le désert de Tsin, à proximité de la montagne de Horeb, à l'endroit connu sous le nom de Mériba ou de Massa[18].

Les yeux rivés sur l'enfilade des sommets arides des montagnes environnantes, Moïse, l'élu de Yahvé, allait y douter pour la première fois, au fond de son cœur, des pouvoirs du Créateur. Comment produire de l'eau au cœur du désert pour donner à boire à un demi million d'individus ?

A Massa, pour un long moment, l'Infini cesse de parler à Moïse. Et ce n'est point seulement pour éprouver ainsi la foi du prophète, mais surtout pour donner à la postérité, au delà du fantastique parfois exorbitant des miracles précédents, la vraie mesure des pouvoirs illimités de dieu.

Dans la transformation de la pierre en eau, de Massa, sont censées se contenir, comme dans une somme, toutes les transgressions de la nature opérées par le démiurge pour édifier la foi des mortels.

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Les douze tribus d'Israël réunies autour du Rocher, telles les brebis entourant le berger... L'énorme distance qui nous sépare des temps bibliques n'est pas sans prêter à la lecture des Ecritures des réverbérations poétiques. C'est afin d'inculquer aux Hébreux la volonté du "Rocher" (appellation consacrée de la divinité dans la Bible) – que Yahvé les fit quitter l'Egypte. Car ce n'est qu'à cette condition que les Hébreux pouvaient devenir, de tous les peuples, le troupeau aimé du Tout-Puissant.

Il leur fallait oublier les richesses et les joies éphémères de l'Egypte, la beauté du Nil, la fraîcheur des jardins, le parfum des fleurs, il fallait qu'ils arrivent à mépriser le pouvoir des hommes et à ignorer celui des idoles.

Car les descendants d'Abraham, pèlerins au Sinaï, y étaient conviés pour des noces magiques qui devaient se célébrer au cœur même du désert, loin du monde.

[18] Nombres 20, 13 et Deuteronome 33.8.

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Au bout de trente huit années, tout le peuple sorti de l'Egypte reçoit l'accolade des sables. Ils avaient tous pêché, ils devaient tous mourir. Pourtant, c'est au prix de ce sacrifice que les enfants nés au Sinaï allaient se constituer en un nouveau peuple, fidèle à Yahve.

On ignore la raison pour laquelle Brancusi avait pris la décision de détruire le plâtre pour le groupe colossal évoquant la *Traversée de la Mer Rouge*. Peut-être éprouvait-il des difficultés à concevoir une composition rassemblant une multitude de personnages, trop proche, de par les contraintes de la figuration, du style académique qu'il n'agréait pas. Peut-être aussi, en était-il venu à réaliser combien l'épisode de Massa l'emportait, de par sa portée symbolique, sur celui de la traversée de la Mer Rouge.

Or, dans ce cas, l'abandon du projet sur la traversée de la Mer Rouge fournirait comme un indice que l'artiste lui avait d'emblée substitué dans son esprit un projet plus incitant, consacré notamment à l'épisode de Massa. Et, il se trouve que le penchant de Brancusi à comprimer l'expression plastique en des formes minimales était singulièrement bien servi, en l'occurrence, par le détail fortuit qu'en langue roumaine le nom *Massa* était l'homonyme parfait du mot roumain pour table (*masa*). Sans doute, Brancusi aura-t-il été ravi d'exploiter une telle issue pour demeurer lapidaire là où ses devanciers se seraient égarés dans les méandres de la figuration plastique.

Dans sa vision, la "*Masa*" ... *du Silence* (rappelons qu'en roumain *masa* se lit *massa*), entourée des douze chaises se voulait simplement évoquer, par antonomase, une étape sur un certain parcours initiatique. Au visiteur qui se rend à Târgu-Jiu, la *Masa* est censée lui rappeler une fontaine à l'eau magique, dont celui qui en boit parvient à entendre ... les voix du Silence.

L'ALLEE DES CLEPSYDRES

L'allée du parc est bordée par trentes chaises rectangulaires à formes de clepsydres, disposées sur deux rangées, à raison de cinq groupes de trois chaises, suivies de deux bancs d'une largeur quatres fois celle des chaises.

Aussi, le total des places à s'asseoir, le long de l'allée, correspond-il à trente huit. Or, ce chiffre indique aussi la durée exacte du pèlerinage des tribus d'Israël au Sinaï, après la traversée de la Mer Rouge. Et il se peut que cette coïncidence n'en soit pas une, mais que, bien au contraire, l'artiste se soit servi d'un indice chiffrique apparemment dépourvu de signification pour fournir à la postérité une clef – et non pas la seule – d'accéder au symbolisme de l'ensemble.

Ce détail n'est pas sans confirmer, une fois de plus, comment la section de l'ensemble comprise entre *la 'Masa' du Silence* et *la Porte du Baiser* se laisse interpréter dans les termes d'une allégorie à légende biblique de l'Exode[19].

[19] Friedrich Teja Bach, *Metamorphosen Plastischer Form*, Dumont Buchverlag, 1987, p. 171.

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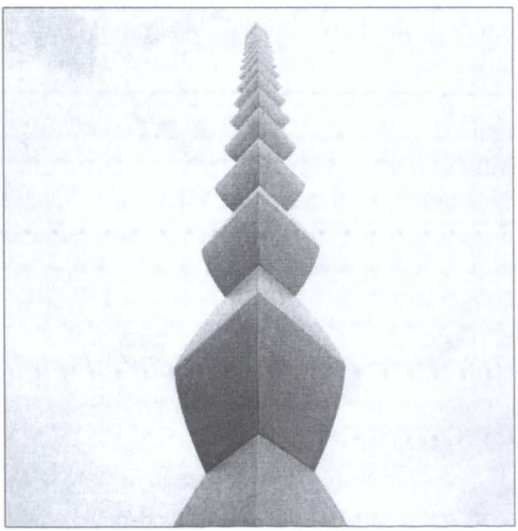
Il est siginicatif que ni la *"Masa" du Silence*, ni la *Porte du Baiser* pas plus, d'ailleurs que *la Colonne infinie* n'évoquent guère d'hypostases d'héroïsme combattant. Brancusi se refuse fermement d'associer à son hommage aux héros quelque référence que ce soit au thème du carnage guerrier. En effet, celui-ci lui semblait totalement dissonant avec les finalités de toute création artistique.

Il est juste de considérer que, dans l'œuvre de Brancusi, l'ensemble qu'il érigea à Târgu-Jiu énonce le plus clairement l'essence solaire de son esthétique. L'artiste y fait l'éloge à la mémoire des héros tombés au combat par le truchement d'une allégorie sur une guerre où il n'existe notamment point d'ennemis. Car, en effet, les Hébreux errant dans le désert du Sinaï n'eurent-ils à y combattre que contre ... eux mêmes.



La colonne infinie, 1937, fonte recouverte de cuivre jaune.

Voici donc la dichotomie radicale mise en exergue par le discours du maître. En épurant l'idée d'héroïsme de toute contingence avec les actions sanguinaires dont les chroniques des guerres sont maculées, *la Voie des âmes des héros*, l'artiste la conçoit à l'intention de tout individu désireux de se surpasser et qui, pour y parvenir, édifie sa conscience au contact de repères fiables d'émulation.

*

Il convient d'observer, en marge des référence aux connotations mythiques de l'ensemble, que la section comprise entre la *Table du Silence* et la *Porte du Baiser* énonce, en termes abstraits, – en s'adressant surtout aux jeunes –, un schéma d'initiation sur les étapes de maturation de l'individu, autrement dit, un schéma dont tout individu peut se servir pour se préparer à bien assumer, dans la vie, des responsabilités majeures.

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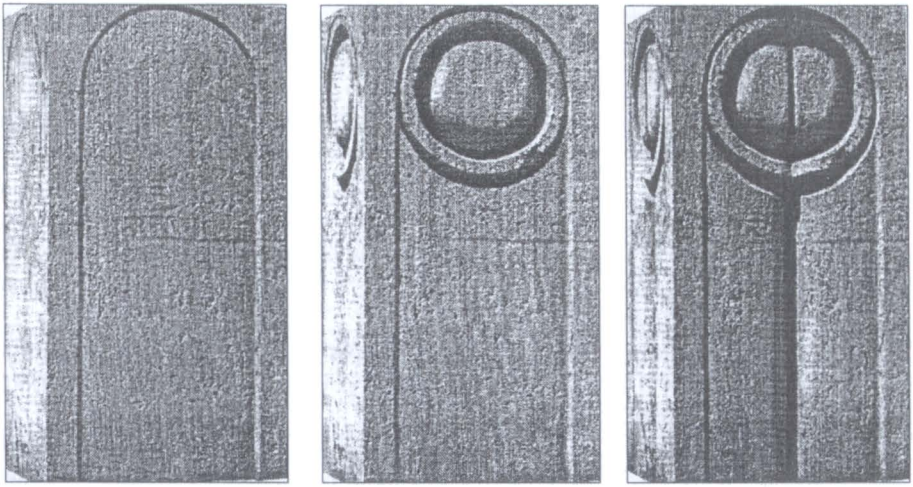

Schéma conceptuel de la *Porte du Baiser*.

La *Table du Silence* et les chaises qui l'entourent définissent, dans ce sens, un rapport optique qui se laisse interpréter, tel que nous venons de le dire, comme une allégorie sur la maturation de l'esprit.

Pour les individus promis à une destinée à part, la vocation prend forme presque à leur insu, un jour commun, quand l'existence se révèle tout à coup, et pour la première fois, comme régie par un *centre*.

Or, c'est bien l'allégorie abstraite de la *Table du Silence*, que l'artiste imagine pour illustrer ce thème. Il incombe au visiteur de bien saisir, dans ce sens, l'opposition de valeurs esthétiques entre, d'une part, la *Table*, massive, immuable, pérenne et, d'autre part, l'aspect de fragilité juvénile des chaises. Les destinées exceptionnelles se bâtissent nécessairement sur la réalisation que l'existence de l'individu (la chaise-clepsydre ronde) suppose un centre sur-individuel (la *Table)*.

Sans doute, l'acception effective du centre varie-t-elle indéfiniment en fonction de la psychologie et des données existentielles propres à chaque individu. Et ce jour passe inaperçu, apparemment sans laisser de traces (ce qui revient à dire, en épousant le discours du sculpteur, que les chaises ne se confondent pas avec la *Table*).

Toutefois, dans les années qui suivent (voir l'*Allée des chaises-clepsydre quarrées*), des expériences diverses de l'existence cotidienne contribuent d'une façon ou d'une autre à consolider l'idée que l'existence comporte un but, qu'elle suit une direction, qu'il mérite de la subordonner à un idéal.

Et au goût de l'artiste qui réduit ce thème à son expression plastique la plus abstraite, une allée jalonnée de clepsydres en pierre se prête à merveille à évoquer allégoriquement la succession de moments et d 'expériences dont s'articulent le processus de cristallisation de l'individualité.

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En effet, est-ce que les évènements à part d'une existence, notamment ceux qui surprennent et enrichissent la pensée des jeunes – parce que, fixés durablement dans la mémoire de chacun, ils deviennent autant de repères indélébiles de la conscience –, est-ce que de tels instants vécus dans l'émerveillement, l'émotion, l'angoisse n'arrêtent pas le temps, ne serait-ce que pour une fraction de seconde ?

Sans doute, les chaises carrées de l'allée qui conduit vers la *Porte du Baiser* sont-elles censées symboliser de telles séquences de la vie où, pour un brève instant, le sable gèle dans la clepsydre du temps ; il est possible d'imaginer les clepsydres comme autant de représentations abstraites de jalons existentiels, toujours différents d'un individu à l'autre et pourtant tellement similaires de par leur essence.

L'enfance et l'adolescence ignorent les graves responsabilités qui incombent aux adultes, même si, dans les moments de crise, le stress et l'inquiétude n'épargnent personne dans une famille.

Et pourtant, les tournants dans l'existence des parents sont souvent ressentis par les jeunes seulement dans le registre du suspens, comme s'ils étaient de simples spectateurs à une pièce de théâtre. Car, dans la psychologie de l'adolescence, les joies et les douleurs, les succès et les échecs sont d'abord l'affaire des parents.

Mais arrive le moment où le spectacle prend fin. Car ce qu'il y avait à apprendre s'est faiblement fixé dans la conscience du jeune et le rend apte de monter à son tour sur la scène de la vie.

Dans le conte du sculpteur, *la Porte du Baiser* trace les clairs confins du début de l'existence active d'une nouvelle génération. C'est ici que finit le parc, c'est ici également que finit la pièce jouée par les plus âgés au profit des plus jeunes.

*

C'est donc dans l'enceinte calme et belle du parc de Târgu-Jiu que Brancusi donne corps à une métaphore en pleine air sur l'ambiance protégée du foyer. L'ensemble était né en réponse à l'initiative de la Ligue des femmes de Gorj et, dans ce sens, il était bien opportun que, dans la section initiale, un éloge soit formulé à l'adresse de la vie de famille.

Et, lorsqu'elle est interprétée dans le contexte de cette section de l'ensemble, la *Porte du Baiser* évoque la fête du mariage, qui est celle de l'union de la destinée des mariés par le lien pérenne des noces. La bas-relief qui fait le pourtour du linteau annonce l'entrée dans la vie active d'une nouvelle génération ; alors que les deux piliers de la *Porte du Baiser,* leurs surfaces traversées par la marque du sacrifice, évoque avec déférence – entre multiples connotations possibles – l'existence dévoué des géniteurs.

LA VILLE

Une fois que le visiteur a dépassé la *Porte du Baiser*, il se retrouve dans la ville. Brancusi aura considéré qu'il était redondant d'inclure dans son allégorie des références plastiques sur la vie cotidienne.

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A quoi bon, en effet, donner une image de la réalité, du moment où elle est présente partout. De toute façon, la copie n'égale jamais l'original.

Târgu-Jiu était à l'époque – et elle continue de l'être aujourd'hui – une modeste bourgade, à l'horizon clos sur des jalons forcément demi-mesure. Or, le sculpteur y trouvait, grâce au projet de l'ensemble, une excellente occasion de définir une certaine acception de l'existence qu'il entendait récuser de toute son énergie – et dont en rend, par ailleurs, pleinement compte sa décision de jeunesse de fuire la bourgade, d'aller s'évader vers les grandes villes.

La conscience aiguë d'une certaine supériorité d'âme du paysan par rapport aux habitants des villes et des bourgades, Brancusi la gardera intacte tout le long de sa vie. Outre les diverses denrées et nourritures, la culture de la terre fait germer une certaine sagesse – une loi sacrée de l'honneur, dictée par la Nature et partant sacrée – dont le paysant se constitue à travers les millénaires en fidèle et inflexible gardien.

Cette loi, il se trouve que l'existence urbaine ne cesse de la transgresser. Et comme dans la ville la voix de la terre ne se laisse plus entendre, les gens finissent par l'oublier. En érigeant l'ensemble de Târgu-Jiu, Brancusi ne manquera pas l'occasion de formuler un éloge indirect à l'adresse du modeste village de Hobita où il était né. C'était bien là qu'il avait appris à purifier son cœur, à l'imprégner d'images pérennes de beauté et d'harmonie inspirées par la nature.

C'est précisément au nom de cette vision existentielle, configurée dans les années de l'adolescence, qu'il allait se mobiliser pour exalter les rythmes de la vie et les voix des matières comme autant de catalyseurs de beauté.

*

Il est, à ce propos, indispensable pour le visiteur qui se rend à Târgu-Jiu de se donner le temps de contempler la bourgade, l'enchevêtrement de ruelles qui ne mènent nulle part. Car c'est à celui qui considère d'un regard égal la *bourgade* et *l'ensemble* brancusien que les idées du sculpteur se révèleront avec un surcroît de clarté. Autrement dit, aller à Târgu-Jiu pour ne visiter que l'ensemble condamne d'emblée à l'opacité quant à ses significations.

"La *Colonne infinie* est la négation du labyrinthe". C'est dans ses termes que l'artiste avertit le visiteur sur l'importance qu'il y a de prendre en considération les deux termes de la relation en question – *l'ensemble* (le monument) et la *ville* – afin notamment de réfléchir en quoi ils s'opposent l'un à l'autre.

Une carte de Târgu-Jiu rend visible cette particularité de la ville, à savoir que les rues intersèctent, pour la plupart, sous un angle droit la *Voie des âmes des héros*. Une fois que l'on a traversé la *Porte du Baiser* pour entrer dans la ville, cela équivaut, pour le visiteur à la tentation sans cesse réitérée, de s'engager tantôt à droite, tantôt à gauche, sur les diverses rues qu'il rencontre, pour parvenir ainsi à connaître la ville.

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C'est à ce point que l'acception métaphorique impartie par l'artiste à la traversée de la ville, en suivant la *Voie des âmes des héros*, parvient-elle à révéler son plein sens. Les héros – Brancusi semble vouloir inscrire subrepticement cette idée dans l'esprit du visiteur – se font recruter parmis ceux qui repoussent les tentations du "labyrinthe", parce qu'ils ont la vocation de s'assigner un but, l'intelligence de définir la voie qui y mène, et la force de la suivre jusqu'au bout.

*

Les considérations exposées plus haut préparent le terrain pour une discussion sur le symbolisme de la *Colonne infinie*. Nous n'avons pas la possibilité d'entamer ici cette analyse qui prétend une exploration détaillée du lexique sculptural brancusien, tel qu'il s'est constitué au fur et à mesure de l'évolution de l'œuvre.

Pourtant, il est possible d'anticiper que le symbolisme de la *Colonne infinie* – en tant que pièce maîtresse du projet de Târgu-Jiu – doit nécessairement être corroborée par les allégories de l'ensemble. Et, à ce titre, il est facile d'observer comment la traversée de la ville, qui sollicite le visiteur à s'imposer de suivre la voie droite, plutôt qu'à s'égarer dans une errance détendue dans les rues de la ville, préfigure la loi de génération de la *Colonne*. Car chaque module de la *Colonne infinie* ennonce, en fait, ce jeu – qui peut décrire celui d'une vie dédiée à un but majeur – des *évasions* (des losanges), chaque fois contenues par la volonté du *retour* à l'axe central.

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THE IMPURITY OF THE "INAUSPICIOUS DEAD" – AVOIDING CONTAMINATION WITH THE CORPSE

ADINA RĂDULESCU

Many Romanian and foreign folklorists and anthropologists who studied the Romanian funeral rites repeatedly pointed out the ambivalent attitude of the living towards the dead, and more precisely towards their corpses. Thus, the attitude of showing respect for the dead tends to coexist with the performance of an aggressive rituality towards the corpse, consisting in rites of separation, practices of avoiding contact with and rejecting the corpse, not to mention the forms of ritual violence and corpse mutilation. For what particular reason should the living begin to have this attitude of avoiding, rejecting and even protecting themselves against the dead? Why should death be seen as a 'contagious disease' that the living may catch by coming into contact with the dead? I began to ask myself questions like these during my fieldwork research (2003–2007) covering a few Romanian villages. My fieldwork was part of the process of research and documentation for my doctoral thesis in Romanian ethnology and folklore, which was completed with the dissertation *Protection Rites within the Romanian Funeral Customs*. In the present ethnohistorical essay my attempt is to dwell on the circumstances that shaped *the rites and measures of protection against the dead* in the 19th and respectively 20th century Romanian villages.

The uneasiness and repugnance felt by the living when faced with the first signs of corpse decomposition were attributed to the folk belief that the agressive dead were to come back to harm the living and that the living could become contaminated from any kind of contact with the dead body. These psychsomatic reactions erase the cultural distance existent between the primitive man and the modern man, the only advantage for the latter being the fact that the partial or total contact with the body can now be avoided due to modern funeral undertaking services.

Is the corpse a possible source of infection and contamination for those around it? The answer to this question, extracted from a treatise on body decomposition, is negative, with the reasonable exceptions presented as follows:

REF/JEF, *1–2*, p. 69–80, Bucureşti, 2008

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"The putrefying corpse, subjected to the decomposition process, has a macabre aspect, but, generally speaking, it does not pose any threat to human health unless death was caused by some mortal infection, such as plague, tetanus, anthrax, hepatitis or AIDS. During history, the smell and the repugnant aspect of a decomposing body had naturally led people to the conviction that it might represent a source of infection for the living. The fear of contamination added to the general ideas regarding the person's lifeless body and spirit and it was reflected in the Burial Act, issued in Great Britain, in 1855, forbidding burials at a distance less than 100 metres from people's buildings, without the owners' approval"[1].

Consequently, we have a comforting answer concerning the fact that, at least for the three-day period preceding the funeral, the physical contact with the dead does not pose any threat to the health of the living. Things are different when the person died of one of the infectious diseases mentioned above or of new types of pestilence. In this case, the protection measures taken during the funeral ritual are imperiously necessary, their omission causing unfortunate consequences. The contamination by physical contact with the infectious corpse, with its excretions and the objects used to clean it is real, being proved by the high rate of mortality registered during the plague. Along with pestilence and war came the common graves, true masticators melting individualities, shameful but practical solutions needed to rapidly remove hundred or thousand of corpses who might have contaminated the living.

The Romanian funeral tradition in the 19th and 20th century contains many measures and rites of protection, meant to prevent a possible contamination with the dead and the objects that belonged to them even when the corpses do not represent a real source of infection. And even in the absence of a real danger of contamination with the corpse, the living still experience an acute fear of contamination with death and with the impurity of the dead. It is believed that the presence of death and its distinct marks prevails over everything like an invisible fume; there is also the "smell of death" insinuating into the hair, clothes and even the souls of the living. This aspect seems to have been very well depicted by the Romanian ethnologist Ernest Bernea who so inspiringly expressed the mysterious nature of death: "The first aspect related to death in my research is that it is some sort of spiritual substance, an immaterial reality and yet, an active presence; death is a kind of magical fluid whose power is hard to be contained. And it is from this nature that it gains its power of penetration, of infiltration into everything. The second aspect of death is that it presents itself as a contagious phenomenon; it

[1] Cedric Mims, *Enciclopedia morţii* [Encyclopedia of Death], Bucureşti, Editura Orizonturi, 2006, p. 137.

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contaminates everything it touches, namely everything/everyone that is present and participates in this act of death one way or another"[2].

Vladimir Jankélévitch, a philosopher concerned with the theme of death proposes an interesting puristic approach on the impure contact or touch, opposing it to the transfiguring mystical contact: "the terror that we experience when faced with an infectious contact is some sort of mystical horror: the one who touches a leper becomes a leper himself; that who touches only with his fingertip the contagious being finds himself entirely transformed by the latter, totally disappropriated, disintegrated, invaded by the other. As there is a touch that deifies, glorifies, beatifies, a sublime touch that trans-substantializes or transfigures our entire being and radically assimilates it with the object of any love, the same way there is a degrading touch, embodying the tactile form of contamination – the ontological identification occurs both in the shape of evil contagion and in that of unification with God: the impure touch is somehow the inversion of the mystical contact; the infection is an inverted ecstasy"[3].

The ethnological data regarding the mourners' instinctive need for protection against the dead, data collected during my fieldwork research or stored in published anthologies and monographs, revealed only a system of folk beliefs, superstitions and stories about the 'noxious dead' and about the revenants who would drag the loved ones into the afterworld. Yet, no solid, rational explanation was to be found, no causal link that could satisfy the 21st century inquisitive mind. That was the moment in my research when I shifted my focus to historical studies related to events that caused a high rate of mortality in the Romanian villages in the last three centuries.

The studies of the Romanian historian Toader Nicoară regarding the pestilences that devastated Romania between 1600–1830 and the author's observations regarding people's attitudes, reactions and empirical means of fighting these pestilences gave me solid ground to issue *the hypothesis according to which, in the Romanian funeral ritual* (19th and 20th century), *the measures of protection taken by the living to avoid the contact with the corpse were a reminiscence of the hygienic-prophylactic measures imposed during the period of pestilences.* In other words, the danger of contamination existent during the period of pestilences was so strongly felt by people that the protection and purification forms adopted at that time continued to persist in the rural mentality a long time after the purpose for which they had been destined disappeared. Thus, a general form of caution was installed when caring for the ill, the dying and the dead, with strict quasi-ritualized measures and

[2] Ernest Bernea, *Moartea şi înmormântarea în Gorjul de nord* [Death and Funerals in Northern Gorj], Bucureşti, Editura Cartea Românească, 1998, p. 96.

[3] Vladimir Jankélévitch, *Pur şi impur,* tradus în româneşte de Elena-Brânduşa Steiciuc [The Pure and the Unpure, translated into Romanian by...], Bucureşti, Editura Nemira, 2001, p. 48.

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interdictions for the protection of the caretakers, so as not to become infected with death, still seen as a contagious disease.

As evidence in supporting my hypothesis I will mention, along with the historical data regarding the large number of human casualties[4] caused by pestilences in the Romanian territories between 1600-1830, some of the *protective measures* adopted during that period: fleeing from the contaminated areas and finding shelter in isolated mansions (for the gentry) or in monasteries (for the poor); making use of mythical-magical measures to fight plague – such as the exorcizing ritual called «the plague shirt»; using the following objects as amulets or talismans: precious stones, cabalistic signs, «plague words» (written on paper and tied around the left hand) and even a plague «spot», dried, cut into pieces and sold at high prices, using sacred relic, sacred canonical or apocryphal books; organizing, with the consent of the authorities, religious processions to combat plague, during which people used to pray collectively and sing praising hymns.

Shifting my focus again from the period of plague to the funeral ritual specific to the 19th and 20th centuries, I was to find out that *the protective and purification measures taken by the living in the presence of the dead were quite similar with the quarantine measures taken against pestilences decades before.* Here are some of these funeral measures that leave the impression that death is seen as the bubonic plague itself: burning (or sometimes burying) the clothes of the dead, the straws on which he or she had been washed, the bed, the mattress, the blankets, the towel used to wipe the corpse; fumigations with incense, basil or other sweet-scented plants, eating garlic and robbing the body of the living with garlic in the shape of a cross, robbing all the doorsteps with garlic in the shape of a cross; sweeping and purifying the housing space after the corpse is taken to the cemetery, etc. The folk custom of making a black oil cross on the gate of the house where a member of the family was touched by plague changed its function in time and was used to signal the presence of a *moroi, strigoi* [revenant] in that house[5].

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[4] Paul Binder, *Ciuma în sec. XVII* [The plague in the 17th century], p. 52, apud Toader Nicoară, *Sentimentul de insecuritate în societatea românească la începutul timpurilor moderne (1600-1830)* [The feeling of insecurity in the Romanian society at the beginning of modern times], Accent & Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2002, p. 113-129: "in Transylvania the 1602 plague caused, along with famine and dysentery, 9000 victims. 70 people would die daily in Braşov and sometimes the number would go up to 125. People could hardly manage to bury their dead. In Braşov they dug a huge grave where the bodies were deposited. The 18th century ended up with a plague breakout in Wallachia and Moldavia in 1796-1797 and with nutrition diseases – pellagra and scurvy; the first 3 decades of the 19th century: in 1812, at the end of the Russian-Turkish war plague broke out, reaching its peak in 1814-1815. It was called Caragea's plague and it caused 300 victims a day and the total number of deaths throughout the country was over 90.000 according to some sources. In 1829, Wallachia was devastated by plague for the last time, due to the quarantine measures taken by the general Pavel Kisseleff".

[5] Ernest Bernea, *op. cit.*, p. 80: "When the cattle start dying and the people begin getting sick, it is believed that this is caused by a *moroi* in that house and they make a black oil cross on the gate; this custom is performed to deaden the evil. The *moroi* cross is not something praiseworthy in the village but nevertheless it's a necessity... "

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In his historical-medical dissertation about the funeral customs of the Romanians from Transylvania (in the 18th and 19th centuries), the physician L. V. Popp, the first scientist to write about the Romanian funeral customs (his doctoral thesis was published in Romanian, Latin and Hungarian in Vienna, in 1817) highlighted the dangerous mistakes committed during the funeral rites at that time and even before, mistakes that could have posed a real threat to the health of the living. When the rural populations were first confronted with the plague and other infectious diseases there was no medical assistance whatsoever or any preventive medical care. The author obtained the information from his father, who was a priest in a village from Transylvania: "at that time, my beloved father once witnessed the outbreak of plague and several times the outbreak of typhus and the country physician had only one visit in the village for a God damned case of castration"[6].

L. V. Popp expressed his surprise and revolt regarding the peasants' stubborn persistence in respecting all the prescriptions of the funeral customs, thus implicitly assuming the irresponsible risk of passing on the maladies. Here are some of the customs showing *an excessive familiarity with the dead*: kissing the dead and the Gospel placed on their chest (and which had come in contact with their skin), kissing the clothes of the dead before offering them as alms for the poor, preparing the food for the living in the same room with the dead, etc.

This familiarity with the dead started to change when the number of victims caused by the infectious contact with a dead member of the family increased immediately after the funeral. And this change of attitude was not caused by medical reasoning, but by the magic belief that the dead person had become a *strigoi* [revenant] who had returned to take more members from the family in the afterworld. This is the mechanism by which a historical fact (the outbreak of plague and other infectious diseases and their devastating consequences) was translated by the peasants into the language of mythical-magical thinking, since the great number of inexplicable deaths did not make any sense to them. Lacking any medical information, the only solution to set their mind at ease was to find a "scapegoat" (in Rene Girard's terms[7]), a victim. And when the victim was not chosen from among the category of people that were socially discriminated (the foreigner, the Jew, the Gipsy, the witch, the cripple, etc.) it was certainly a dead man who had become a revenant, taking his relatives in the afterworld. No wonder that nowadays, the image of the revenant has started to lose its consistency, being no longer 'nourished' by the high rate of mortality in the villages.

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[6] L. V. Popp, *Disertaţie inauguralã istorico-medicalã* (1817). Tradusã din maghiarã de Varga Attila [Inaugural Historical-Medical Dissertation translated from Hungarian by...], in *Obiceiuri de înmormântare la românii ardeleni* [Funeral Customs with the Romanians from Ardeal], edited by the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Budapest, 2006, p. 218.

[7] René Girard, *Ţapul ispăşitor* [The Scapegoat], Bucureşti, Editura Nemira, 2000.

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From this angle, *the mourners' gestures, behaviours and interdictions during the three days preceding the funeral can be seen as a "strategy of immunization" against the "contagious" contact with death and the dead.* The first mourning interdictions are distinct for men and women, though there are some common elements for both genders: "the man is not allowed to sleep with his woman, to shave or have his hair cut for six weeks, he is not allowed to keep his hat on while the corpse is inside the house or to go to the pub or use abusive language; the woman is not allowed to sleep with her man, to comb her hair while the corpse is inside the house («because she can catch death this way»), to hand wash clothes («because the dirt may infiltrate into the dead man's soul») or touch dirty things"[8]. Women are also to give up any embellishment and wear their hair loose, gestures that are supposed to symbolically mark the moment of death and moaning[9]. There is also another interdiction for women to change their clothes as long as the dead man is inside the house: "The women are not to wear their Sunday clothes, but worn-out clothes. They are not to change their clothes or comb their hair as long as the corpse is inside. A woman is badly thought of if she puts on good clothes before six weeks (or a year) have elapsed since the death of a family member"[10]. The imposed or self-imposed lifestyle of the mourners is an ascetic one, in which the worldly pleasures are abandoned and a last homage is paid to the dead. At the same time, it is a ritual of inner purification, the mourning period being a time of meditation, insight and seeing life from the angle of an imperative *memento mori.*

With primitive populations, the main significance of the mourning signs was that of camouflage and disguise of the living from the sight of the dead, who could haunt and harm the former. Here are some of the *protective mourning conducts of the primitives* mentioned in J. G. Frazer's treatise: sound camouflage, ensured by the interdiction to speak especially to widows; head shaving; greasing the body with white clay, soot or mud; eyebrows shaving; various facial mutilations; the interdiction to wash their bodies; and even giving new names to the mourners[11]. Though in the Romanian traditional communities there still are rituals similar to the primitives' mourning, their function of camouflaging against the spirits of the dead is no longer significant; their prominent function is that of avoiding contamination with the toxic energy emanated by an impure dead. As we have mentioned before, *the bodily protection of the living in the presence of the dead is ensured by willful acts of neglecting personal hygene* (avoiding washing, shaving, combing, hair cutting or clothes changing). Symbolically speaking, the living impose upon

[8] Ernest Bernea, *op. cit.*, pp. 30–31.

[9] T. T Burada, *Datinele poporului român la înmormântări* [The Funeral Customs of Romanians], Iaşi, Tipografia Naţională, 1882, p. 9.

[10] Adrian Fochi, *Datini şi eresuri populare de la sfârşitul secolului al XIX-lea: Răspunsurile la chestionarele lui Nicolae Densuşianu* [Folk Customs and Superstitions at the End of the 19th Century: Answers to Nicolae Densuşianu's Questionaries], Bucureşti, Editura Minerva, 1976, p. 164.

[11] Sir James George Frazer, *La crainte des morts dans la religion primitive*, 3ème série, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1937, pp. 40-46.

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themselves the experience of a 'temporary death' during the mourning period, followed by a rebirth and a continuation of their life at the end of mourning.

By forbidding the natural manifestation of the living's physiological processes while being in the presence of the dead, the funeral tradition prevents the living from sharing the same fate as the dead. *Sleeping* is not allowed in the presence of a corpse, neither is *hiccupping* or *sneezing* ("if a person present in the dead man's house sneezes, he or she had better tear his/her shirt or coat a little bit lest the same thing may happen to him/her"[12]). Women should neither *wash their hair* ("neighbours are cautious not to wash their hair while there is a dead man in the next house, to avoid having headaches"[13]), nor *look into the mirror* ("once a person dies, the mirror is turned «so that the people in the house should forget the dead person and not be afraid of him/her»"[14]; or "the mirror is covered with something because the one who sees himself/herself in the mirror dies within a year"[15]).

Another series of interdictions for the living related to the presence of the dead inside the house implies ceasing certain types of household activities, such as *sweeping* and *taking the garbage out*: "According to the belief of Romanians from Bucovina, Moldavia and Muntenia, one must not sweep the house where there is a dead man until he is taken to the cemetery, for fear that other members of that house might die"[16]. Some authors consider that the interdiction to sweep the house is not a simple act meant to purify the space; it is aimed at preventing a ritual mistake, namely sweeping away the dead man's soul: "As long as the corpse is still in the death chamber, one must not either sweep or dust that room for fear that one might thus cast out the dead man's soul"[17]. I found a different explanation for this interdiction in the Maya funeral tradition: "At the moment of death, the soul leaving the body is in a pure state, but it must return to collect its sins for the Final Judgment. The sins had been left in the dirt of the corpse, in its clothes and in its hammock. As the soul has to get back its sins from this dirt, one must not sweep the house. But, once the prayers will entrust the soul to god in the 7th day, the house will then be cleaned"[18]. What we find condensed in this quotation is an entire

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[12] G. S. Ioneanu, *Mica colecțiune de superstițiile poporului român* [A Small Collection of Romanian Superstitions], Buzău, Editura Librăriei Modernă A. Davidescu, 1888, p. 37.

[13] P.V. Ştefănucă, *Folklor din județul Lăpuşna* [Folklore from Lăpuşna County], in „Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor" [The Yearbook of the Folklore Archives], II, publicat de Ion Muşlea, Bucureşti, Monitorul oficial şi Imprimeriile statului, Imprimeria Națională, 1933, p. 106.

[14] Ion Muşlea, *Cercetări folklorice din Țara Oașului* [Folklor Fieldwork in Țara Oașului], in „Anuarul Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor" [The Yearbook of the Folklore Archives], I, publicat de Ion Muşlea, Cluj, Cartea Românească, 1932, p. 158.

[15] *Sărbători şi obiceiuri. Răspunsuri la chestionarele Atlasului Etnografic Român* [Celebrations and customs. The answers to the questionaries of the Romanian Ethnographic Atlas], vol. I, Oltenia, Gorj 8, Olt 9-10, p. 176.

[16] Sim. Fl. Marian, *Înmormântarea la români* [Funerals with the Romanians], Bucureşti, Editura Saeculum I.O., 2000, p. 193.

[17] Catherine Pont-Humbert, *Dicționar universal de rituri, credințe şi simboluri* [Universal Dictionary of Rites, Beliefs and Symbols], Editura Lucman, 1998, pp. 210-211.

[18] Paul Arnold, *Cartea mayașă a morților* [The Maya Book of the Dead], Editura Antet, 1996, p. 58.

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vision regarding the impurity of the dead: to put it in a nutshell, the sins burdening a man's soul after death are temporarily abandoned in the dirt of the corpse, in the clothes and the objects that belonged to the dead and, later on, the soul returns to collect its burden. During this interval, the dead man is considered to be the most dangerous because all the sins and wrongdoings of his entire life now become tangible and are imbued in the dead man's sweat, smell, excretions and in all the objects present in the death chamber. Within this context, the physical and spiritual contact of the living with the corpse is seen as a way of taking over the dead man's sins. *Thus, the fear of contamination with death has as an explicit equivalent in the fear of contamination with the moral impurity of the dead.*

The impurity of the dead may also contaminate the neighbours and their houses unless a series of interdictions related to the contact with the house[19] that shelters the corpse of a deceased family member are respected. For a three-day span preceding the funeral all normal neighbourhood relations with this house are suspended as well as the working activity. In other words, the neighbours are prohibited from working in their households during the period of prefuneral arrangements: "The dead man's neighbours have to respect certain rituals so as not to bring any misfortune upon themselves; thus, they are prohibited from doing any handwork until after the funeral, otherwise «their hands will become numb»"[20]. During the prefuneral period the mourners are also forbidden to return an object borrowed from neighbours, for fear that they may transfer death to their houses.[21]

The noxious character of the dead, considered impure and dangerous (especially when they died of an agonizing death) impregnates the water in which the corpse was washed, the wooden-tub, the bowl from which water was poured and the cloth used to wipe and dry the dead body. These are the objects onto which the uncleanness of the dead is transferred and which are deemed to be contaminated. The funeral tradition offers not only a precise series of measures preventing the living from coming in contact with these "deadly" objects, but also a detailed list with the possible danger to which the living may expose themselves by negligence or accident. Therefore, stepping into the place where the water from washing the corpse was thrown would have the following harmful consequences:

– *ands and feet of those who stepped into it would become numb:* "The water was thrown near a fence, so that nobody would step into it, because otherwise his/her hands and feet would become numb"[22];

[19] In the Romanian villages, during the three days preceding the burial, the corpse remains in the house where the person lived his entire life; the corpse is not taken to a funeral house or to a chapel.

[20] Ion Muşlea, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[21] P. V. Ştefănucă, *op. cit.*, p. 106: "While the dead man is inside the house, if the mourners borrow a pan, a shovel or a spade, they are to be returned to the neighbours only after the burial, so that there should be no deaths in their families".

[22] *Sărbători şi obiceiuri* [Celebrations and customs], vol. I, Oltenia, Olt, p. 155 and also the entire areas in Oltenia and Transylvania.

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- *animals that might drink water from that place would become impure*: "The water was thrown in an isolated place so as not to pollute something and to prevent animals (a pig or a hen) from drinking it"[23];
- *young people who might step into it would never get married:* "In a safe place so that the young women and men would not step into it and remain unmarried"[24];
- *people stepping into it would come down with jaundice (icterus):* "It was thrown at a fence. It was believed that if one stepped into it, one might come down with jaundice"[25];
- *the living would start dreaming of the dead and even have visions of them*: "It was not good to step into the dead people's water because one might start dreaming of them and even have visions of them in the daylight"[26];
- *people who step into it "would lose their memory* (Rădăuți – Prut, Botoşani), *would lose their tongue* (Draxeni and Rînceni – Vaslui) *or would get scared to death* (Andrieni – Suceava)";[27]
- *the living might actually die or tread a dangerous path:* "It was not good to step into the dead people's water, one might die soon or something bad might happen to them", "If you throw it on a living man, he/she may die"[28].

A very interesting rite of protection is found in Moldavia and it is performed right before throwing away the dead man's water: "After washing the dead man, the people inside the house mirror themselves in his/her water. Thus, they manage to let go of the dead and forget him/her"[29]. There is the well-known interdiction that the living are forbidden to look at themselves in the mirror as long as there is a corpse inside the house. On the one hand, the natural act of projecting one's image in the mirror is forbidden but, on the other hand, mirroring oneself in what is also called "dead water" is indicated as reverse therapeutic practice, meant to forget the dead and untie the living's dependence on him/her. This rite of protection is based on the magic principle of attraction, the evil and impure having the force to attract the evil and impure. By mirroring themselves in the water imbued with all the uncleanness of the dead, the living will purify themselves of all the impurities taken over by their contact with the corpse. The "dead water" functions as the propitious element to facilitate this transfer by reverse attraction or similitude. *Symbolically speaking, the "dead water" is considered an impure mirror, a mirror of the other world, opposed*

[23] *Ibidem*, vol. I, Gorj 13, 14, p. 155.
[24] *Ibidem*, vol. I, Olt 6, p. 155.
[25] *Ibidem*, vol. III, Cluj 1, p. 167: vol. II, Maramureş 2, Satu Mare 14, p. 136.
[26] *Ibidem*, Sibiu 11, p. 167.
[27] Ion H Ciubotaru, *Marea trecere* [The Great Passage], Bucureşti, Editura Grai şi Suflet – Cultura Națională, 1999, p. 51.
[28] *Sărbători şi obiceiuri* [Celebrations and customs], vol. IV, Galați, 10, p. 186; vol. III, Sălaj 9, p. 167.
[29] *Ibidem*, Suceava 9, p. 185.

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to the "life mirror" of this world. And the very act of looking at oneself in these mirrors enables both the entry and the exit from these two worlds.

The same magic principle of similitude activated by visual contact functions in the interdiction *not to look at the dead* addressed to a pregnant woman, so that her child should not be born as yellow and pale as the dead. This belief is for instance present both in the Romanian and Russian folklore, the protection imposed being different in both folk cultures mentioned: "If a pregnant woman comes to a funeral, she should have a red thread tied to her finger so that her child should not be born pale"[30]; "though it was all right for a pregnant woman to approach a corpse, she should avoid direct visual contact with it, because if she didn't, her child would be born pale. The belief that an unborn child would reflect the appearance of a corpse seen by the pregnant soon-to-be mother was and is still present in many parts of Russia"[31]. This belief, as well as the one mentioned before, according to which if the living stepped into the water used to wash a corpse might come down with jaundice, have a common source. According to magical thinking, coming down with jaundice and giving birth to a pale baby may be put down to direct tactile contamination (the former belief) or to indirect visual contamination (the latter one); medically speaking, these two symptoms of yellow jaundice could have been caused by a real infection with a form of hepatitis virus, by coming in contact with the infected corpse and its objects. Lacking any medical information and having no specialized medical services, this hepatitis infection was interpreted as being caused by different ways of magic contact with the corpse.

In the Romanian folk tradition, the death of the first born was considered to be maleficent to the family, as it could lead to the death of the following children, unless the parents took certain precautions. An example of these precautions, registered by S. Fl. Marian in Muntenia and Bucovina, was that the family should not attend their child's funeral: "if the first born in a family dies, the family shall not go to his/her grave so as to prevent the death of other offsprings"[32].

Coming back to the funeral measures taken to avoid contamination with the impurity of the dead, in Transylvania, Banat, Crişana and Maramureş there was the custom to burn all the objects that had come in contact with the dead. The straws from the dead man's mattress were burnt, the straws on which the corpse had been washed and sometimes even the wodden-tub in which the corpse had been washed[33]. The objects used to clean the corpse (the soap, the comb, the cloth used

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[30] *Sărbători şi obiceiuri* [Celebrations and customs.], vol. I, Gorj 11, p. 175.

[31] E. A. Warner, *Russian Peasant Beliefs and Practices Concerning Death and the Supernatural Collected in Novosokol'niki Region*, Pskov province, Russia, 1995, Part II - *Death in Natural Circumstances*, published in *Folklore* 111, No.1, April 2000, p. 267.

[32] Sim. Fl. Marian, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[33] *Sărbători şi obiceiuri* [Celebrations and customs], vol. III, Bistriţa Năsăud 3, p 167, Alba 13, p. 166; vol. II, Arad 17, Bihor 16, p. 135, Satu Mare 7, p. 135: "After the last bathing, the straws on which the corpse has been placed are taken out in the yard and burnt", "The tub is burnt and the water is thrown near a fence"; "The objects used are burnt or buried"; "The straws from the dead man's matress were burnt".

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to wipe and dry the corpse after its last bath) were either thrown in a safe, isolated place or burnt, or placed in the coffin with the corpse, but under no circumstances were they kept inside the house, due to the same fear of contamination mentioned throughout this paper: "It is not good to keep the objects used to clean the corpse, the soap and the comb inside the house because they belong to the dead"[34].

A practice (commonly performed in Oltenia throughout the 20th century), with an explicit protective valence, meant to protect those who were supposed to clean the corpse for the funeral consisted in *performing the acts of cleaning the dead in advance, during the period of agony*: "A man had his hair cut and his beard shaved before he died; the nails were cut and thrown away", "A man is shaved before he dies and not after, so as not to shave all his kinsfolk and take them with him. The remains of his beard were placed in his coffin"[35]. In time, it became a general practice in almost all the regions of the country to replace the practice of entirely washing the corpse with its partial washing or with wiping it with a wet towel; these practices were performed more easily and the number of people involved in the last cleaning was thus reduced to one: "Here the dead man is not washed. The dying are washed."; "The dead man is not washed. Someone poured some water from a pot to wet the cloth with which the body was then wiped"[36].

In the Romanian funeral tradition, the condition of impurity and maleficence is not generalized to all categories of dead people. There is also the distinct category of the "auspicious dead", who used to have fortune on their side when they were alive, being prosperous with cattle, agriculture and household. The attitude of the living towards these auspicious dead people, placed along the line of the propitious ancestors of a family is totally different: they are not feared, nor do they trigger the need of protection; on the contrary, their presence around the living and within the space of the household represents a positive aspect, bringing along luck and prosperity. For this reason the living have the tendency to symbolically keep their presence alive within the household, by substituting them with parts or objects that had come in contact with their touch. The magical mentality makes use of a series of *measures and rites of preserving the luck/prosperity of the house* by substituting the presence of the auspicious dead with their *hair locks*, with the *thread* used to measure the body so as to make the coffin and dig the grave or with the *strap* used to tie the dead man's legs before the burial. All these "lucky objects" are kept within the house, being placed above the ceiling beam or door, in the attic, under the doorstep or under the eaves. In other words, they are, symbolically speaking, "buried inside the house", reminding us of the remote Romanian funeral ritual of burying the dead within the foundation of the house.

At this point we may grasp the importance that the attitude of the living towards the dead plays in performing different funeral practices for the *noxious* vs.

[34] *Ibidem*, vol. IV, Vaslui 6, p. 234.
[35] *Ibidem*, vol. I, Olt 15, 10, Vâlcea 6, p. 156.
[36] *Ibidem*, vol. III, Cluj 12, Bistrița Năsăud 7, p. 167.

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auspicious dead. The most relevant funeral aspect from this perspective is the place used to throw the water after washing the dead: in an isolated place (usually near a fence) when the water comes from a *noxious dead* (who died an agonizing death and tortured the living while being alive) and respectively at the root of a tree in the garden, when the water was imbued with the prosperity of the *auspicious dead*: "The water was thrown at the root of a tree in the garden, for the tree to bear fruit, the same way as the man did"[37].

During the funeral procession, the members of a village take certain cautions to protect themselves from the forces of death. Ernest Bernea noticed the following protective measures in a village from Gorj: "When the dead man's cortege passes the houses in the village, certain preventive measures are taken and many significant acts are performed, all related to the representation of death: if a family has a baby, the baby is not put to sleep until the cortege goes away and water is thrown behind the dead person; encountering the cortege in his way, a man in an oxen-driven wagon stopped the wagon, took the oxbow off and remained still till the cortege passed; people who meet the cortege stop walking and if they carry a burden on their shoulder or in their hands they will put it down, take off their hats and make the sign of cross. After the cortege passes they continue their way"[38]. This is a clear example of how the magical mentality sees death as a magnetic force that can suck up everything that is present in its direction.

Making use of historical data as a means of understanding ethnological information, I have discovered how the social-historical background of a certain period in history, more precisely how a crisis period (the outbreak of plague and other infectious diseases in Romania between 1600-1830) may in time leave its distinct mark on the funeral tradition. In the 19th and part of 20th centuries, death was still seen as a contagious disease and the dead were to be feared and kept at a distance. A great part of the funeral customs resembled the quarantine measures taken against the plague and other pestilences. It is essential to underline that this particularity of the Romanian funeral tradition had the great merit of extending the focus of the funeral tradition *from the dead* seen as the sole beneficiary of the funeral rites *to the living* and their needs during the mourning period. At the same time, *the belief in the "auspicious dead" who brought prosperity to their households while alive was the positive core of the funeral tradition that in time managed to restore the warm familiarity of the living with their dead – a dominant aspect of the Romanian funeral tradition. Apart from any social-historical circumstances, the attitude of the living towards their dead makes the latter either "noxious", or "auspicious".*

[37] *Ibidem*, Vol. I, Mehedinți 2, 4, p. 155.
[38] Ernest Bernea, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–63.

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TRANSYLVANIA, "A SUPERSTITIOUS LAND": BRAM STOKER' S *DRACULA* AND HIS SOURCES FOR THE NOVEL

MARIUS MIRCEA CRIŞAN

ABSTRACT

This article is focused on Bram Stoker's sources for *Dracula*, and it analyses the origin of the stereotype of Transylvania as a superstitious land. In *Dracula*, the attitude of the Western characters towards superstition oscillates between superiority and obedience. Stoker's predecessors usually show a distant and ironic attitude towards several Transylvanian beliefs and traditions, but sometimes they try to understand the deep meanings of the Romanian folklore.

Keywords: Stoker, Harker, Dracula, Transylvania.

When Mina Harker, one of the main characters of Stoker's famous novel *Dracula*, comes to Transylvania, she is impressed by the beauty of the places and by the hospitality of the inhabitants, but she is struck by an obvious aspect: "... they are *very, very* superstitious" (Stoker: 429). The fact that she uses italics to emphasise the superstitiousness of the people shows that she sees this feature as one of the defining characteristics of the region. Mina, who becomes Jonathan's wife in the novel, knows a lot of things about Transylvania before her visit. She has read Jonathan's diary in which this region is described as one of the strangest places of the world.

This idea, that Transylvania is a superstitious territory is stated from the beginning of the novel. In his diary, Jonathan Harker shows us the preconception he brings with him from London. Even before entering Transylvania, he thinks of it as of a realm of superstitions, because this is the way in which the region is presented in his readings: "I read that every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool; if so my stay may be very interesting" (Stoker: 10).

Harker's diary describes Transylvania as a fairytale space which shelters both God's Seat and the Devil's den[1]. For the British traveller, a spectacular scene

[1] See Marius Crisan, *The Land Between Good and Evil: Stoker's Transylvania,* in *English Studies,* 2006. pp. 55–78.

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is opened. From the window of the train, Jonathan sees a varied landscape, castles perched on the top of the hills like in old missals, but he also notices groups of picturesque people, whose clothes and manners are different. The new region is revealed to the reader of Harker's diary as a place of Otherness.

First of all, Jonathan Harker is struck by the way in which people manifest their spirituality, by the fact that each gesture he sees becomes a ritualistic act. The signs are everywhere: the first night he spends in Transylvania, at Cluj, Harker hears a dog baying under his window all the time. When the people in Bistrița hear that his destination is Dracula Castle, they open the series of "superstitions" which will mark all his stay in the region. The landlady falls down on her knees and implores Harker to take with him a crucifix, which is pressed to him with the argument "for your mother's sake". Before Harker takes the coach which brings him to Borgo Pass, the nearest known place to Dracula Castle, the people in the courtyard of the inn point two fingers towards him – a sign of protection against the Devil's eye. When Harker and his Transylvanian companions approach a mountain top, all the locals cross themselves reverently in front of that place and tell him that that is God's Seat. During his imprisonment in Dracula Castle, Harker also becomes "superstitious" and uses the "traditional" weapons in his fight against the forces of evil (the crucifix, the garlic, the wild rose and the mountain ash), and first of all he protects himself by praying to God.

The Westerners' attitude towards superstition is dual in *Dracula*: if they are reserved and ironic in the beginning, they eventually understand that this is the only way to defend the forces of evil. The master of the English group, the Dutch Van Helsing, explains:

> All we have to go upon are traditions and superstitions. These do not at the first appear much, when the matter is one of life and death, nay of more than either life or death. Yet must we be satisfied, in the first place because we have to be, no other means is at our control, and secondly, because, after all these things, tradition and superstition, are everything (p. 285).

Superstition is one of the main themes of this complex novel. In an imagological reading, Stoker's attitude towards the superstitions of Transylvania has been interpreted as a point of a vision which presents this region as a symbol of the Eastern Europe, described in opposition to the cultural values of the West.

Many elements from Irish folklore were familiar to Bram Stoker. But his notes show us that he was aware of several customs of Transylvania. The working notes for *Dracula* are kept in Rosenbach Library in Philadelphia and they have been partially published and discussed in some works, such as Elizabeth Miller's or Clive Leatherdale's books. *The Origins of Dracula*, edited by Leatherdale in 1987, is an anthology which gathers fragments from the texts consulted by Stoker and also provides a list of all works which were read by the novelist during the process of writing *Dracula*. As Miller (2006) shows, Stoker needed seven years to write

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this work: from 1890 to 1897. All notes have been recently published in a volume edited by Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller (in 2008).

Stoker's working notes show that his first intention was to place the action of his vampire story in Styria (Austria), a topos which was associated with vampires in James Sheridan Le Fanu's short story *Carmilla*. But when he read about the Transylvanian superstitions, he decided to change the locale of the story from Styria to Transylvania. The text which influenced him to a great extent is Emily Gerard's article, "Transylvanian Superstitions". However, this is not the only work Stoker read on this region. He also consulted four travel memoirs: Charles Boner, *Transylvania: Its Products and Its People* (1865), Andrew F. Crosse, *Round About the Carpathians* (1878), Major E. C. Johnson, *On the Track of the Crescent...* (1885), Nina Elizabeth Mazuchelli's *Magyarland...*(1881) and a brochure on Wallachia and Moldavia written by the British consul at Bucharest in the 1820s: *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820).

Stoker's notes show that his main source for the superstitions in the region under discussion was Emily Gerard's article "Transylvanian Superstitions", published in July 1885 in *The Nineteenth Century*. The topic of the article and the position of the authoress are very clear from the very beginning:

> Transylvania might well be termed the land of superstition, for nowhere else does this curious crooked plant of delusion flourish as persistently and in such bewildering variety. It would almost seem as though the whole species of demons, pixies, witches and hobgoblins, driven from the rest of Europe by the wand of science, had taken refuge within this mountain rampart, well aware that here they would find secure lurking-places, whence they might defy their persecutors yet awhile (p.130).

After such an opening, it is not surprising that Stoker read the article with great interest and was influenced by it to such an extent, that he decided to change the location of the vampire novel. In an interview published shortly after the publication of *Dracula*, Stoker admits that Gerard was one of his main sources and his interview shows that he was aware of her book on Transylvania, *The Land Beyond the Forest*. Emily Gerard spent two years in Sibiu and in Brasov (from 1883 to 1885), where she came with her husband, an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army. Gerard was fond of travelling, and in her book she described both people and places. Several chapters of *The Land Beyond the Forest* are dedicated to Transylvanian superstitions, and the information is very similar to the article published in *The Nineteenth Century*[2].

In *Transylvanian Superstitions*, Gerard shows that even the landscape of the region in discussion is "adapted to serve as background to all sorts of supernatural beings and monsters" (p. 130), as there are numerous caverns full of mystery, fairy-

[2] Actually, her article is developed in some chapters in the book.

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tale forest glades, and solitary lakes. According to her article, the superstitions influence the way of thinking of "the oldest inhabitants" of Transylvania, the Romanians, "so that these people, by nature imaginative and poetically inclined, have built up for themselves out of the surrounding materials a whole code of fanciful superstitions, to which they adhere as closely as to their religion itself" (p. 130).

Gerard shows that many of the superstitions reflect the fear of the devil and of his assistants, witches and dragons, and many toponyms of dangerous places have taken his name.

According to *Transylvanian Superstitions*, one of the frequent concerns of the Transylvanian peasants is the existence of hidden treasures, which can be found on some special nights, such as Christmas Eve, or the night preceding the Easter Sunday – when witches and demons betray the place where the riches were hidden, by a glowing flame. But fearing the forces of evil, the peasants would not commit the sin of approaching the hidden treasures, which are always associated with malefic spirits. However, many people wander about the hills in search of treasures on St. George's eve, which is considered one of the best nights for finding treasures. The legends say that all treasures begin to burn with a bluish flame which can guide the treasure hunters. But this is said to be the night when witches have occult meetings, which take place in lonely caverns or within ruined walls. It is a period when the peasants use different techniques to avert the presence of these spirits, such as the placing of square-cut blocks of green turf in front of the doors and of the windows, which are supposed to bar the entrance to the house or stables. Gerard writes that the peasants distinguish between the lights seen before midnight, which denote treasures kept by benevolent spirits, and those which appear at a later hour, and "are unquestionably of a pernicious nature" (p. 135).

In *Dracula*, during his night trip in Dracula's calèche, Harker discovers the blue flames which signal the places where the treasure had been hidden. The vampire count explains to his English guest, later on, that it is commonly believed that on a certain night of the year, "when all evil spirits are supposed to have unchecked sway, a blue flame is seen over any place where treasure has been concealed" (p. 32) and assures Harker that the treasure had been hidden in the region through which they came that night. In her article Gerard also writes that "sometimes the power of discovering a particular treasure is supposed to be possessed only by members of some particular family" (p. 135) and she gives the example of some peasants in Romania who asked for the help of some aristocrats' heir to find the concealed riches. Stoker uses this idea too, because during his night trip to the castle, Harker realises that Dracula, who is so proud of his aristocratic kin, is one of the few able to know the places where the treasures are hidden.

Some of the superstitions in *Dracula* are mentioned in Boner's travel book too. The gold treasures that Stoker writes about are also referred to by Boner's driver, before entering Transylvania, on his journey from Caransebeş to Haţeg. Like the other Transylvanians, the driver believes in the legend of the hidden gold.

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This myth is associated with a real place, a point in the mountain. The English traveller sees the driver's account as a joke, and his laughing shows that he cannot understand the meaning of the legend, taking it only as a fact. Although there are only two participants in the conversation, it is obvious that they do not belong to the same interpretative community, because the levels of narration (the driver) and of reception (the foreign traveller) are different:

> On our road my driver pointed out to me a point in the mountains where one evening he had seen "a gold fire". "–And what is that?" I asked. "Tis a light which hovers over the spot where gold is buried". "–Of course you went and took possession of it," I said, laughing. "Yes, but being so far I could not find the exact spot, and therefore got nothing" (pp. 41-42).

In this dialogue we can notice the different attitude of the one who regards the myth from an interior point of view and the "foreigner" who sees everything from outside. This is one of the main distinctions in the anthropological approach, as one can see in some of the main works of anthropology, such as Claude Levi Strauss's book *Le Regard éloigné*. The difference between the perspectives from within and from without is always great in Stoker's sources on Transylvania. The British writers prefer to express their amazement in front of some spiritual manifestations related either to traditional customs or Christian worship which they do not understand. Their aim is to create the same astonishment in the British reader who will peruse their travelogues. Johnson's or Crosse's anthropological perspectives (other two travellers who inspired Stoker) are very simple: the Transylvanian peasant fits the pattern which is established from the first time, and any reference to a certain form of spirituality is tagged as superstition[3]. In spite of the fact that Charles Boner's tone is even more bitter in his references to the Romanian peasant of Transylvania, he is the only male writer who does anthropological research and includes in his work some pages of Romanian folklore. But the authors who deserve the greatest attention in Stoker's sources, from the mythological and religious perspective, are the two female writers, Emily Gerard and Nina Elizabeth Mazuchelli. Whereas Gerard's role has been widely discussed so far, much less attention has been paid to the possible influence of Mazuchelli's *Magyarland*, a book which is traversed by a spiritual vision of the world.

And it is not surprising that no study of *Dracula* can avoid Emily Gerard's article *Transylvanian Superstitions*. If Stoker had not read this article, there would not have been, probably, any *Dracula*, and Transylvania would not have been associated with vampires! The idea which influenced Stoker to the greatest extent is Transylvanian peasants' belief in vampires, which is the core of Gerard's article.

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[3] Carmen Andraş, the author of the comprehensive book *România şi imaginile ei în literatura de călătorie britanică* [Romania and Its Images in British Travel Literature], shows that British travelers in the 19th century often see the religious practices of the Orthodox Church as superstitions (p. 374).

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In *Transylvanian Superstitions*, Emily Gerard states that "nowhere does the inherent superstition of the Roumenian [sic] peasant find stronger expression than in his mourning and funeral ceremonies, which are based upon a totally original conception of death" (p. 143). She writes about the fear of the "undead", and distinguishes between "strigoi" and "nosferatu". "Strigoi" is described as follows: when the funeral customs "are not exactly complied with, the soul thus neglected is apt to wander complaining about the earth, and cannot find rest. These restless spirits, called *Strigoi*, are not malicious, but their appearance bodes no good, and may be regarded as omens of sickness and misfortune" (p. 142).

Nosferatu is a malicious creature. Here is the way in which Gerard describes it:

> More decidedly evil, however, is the vampire, or *nosferatu*, in whom every Roumenian peasant believes as firmly as he does in heaven or hell. There are two sorts of vampires - living and dead. The living vampire is in general the illegitimate offspring of two illegitimate persons, but even a flawless pedigree will not ensure anyone against the intrusion of a vampire into his family vault, since every person killed by a *nosferatu* becomes likewise a vampire after death, and will continue to suck the blood of other innocent people till the spirit has been exorcised, either by opening the grave of the person suspected and driving a stake through the corpse, or firing a pistol shot into the coffin. In very obstinate cases it is further recommended to cut off the head and replace it in the coffin with the mouth filled with garlic, or to extract the heart and burn it, strewing the ashes over the grave (p. 142).

There is no reference to the belief in vampires in Boner's book and he never uses this word when writing about Transylvania. Only once, and in passing, does he mention the superstition which was to be discussed by Emily Gerard later on and was to inspire Bram Stoker. What Gerard calls "vampire", Boner calls "witch". According to him, in a village this superstition came from the priest himself. Boner heard of a case when the body was disinterred and turned round in the grave, but he mentions no other details:

> I know one place where the Greek [Orthodox] priest asserted that the bad harvest was owing to the number of witches in the land, and that it would not be better till they were exterminated. Reputed witches who have died are disinterred, and turned round in the grave, to destroy their spells (p. 368).

After the short mention of this superstition among Romanian peasants, Boner adds a footnote in which he explains that the belief in witchcraft exists among the Hungarian and Szekler population too, and shows that "not long ago, a Szekler woman in Ungrisch Kreutz wanted to proceed against another woman for having bewitched her" (p. 368). The information about this belief among the "Saxon" population is taken from a study in German (Friedrich Müller, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Hexenglaubens and des Hexenprocesses in Siebenbürgen*).

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One can notice that the same fear of ghosts is "translated" by two British travellers with distinct terms: "witch" or "vampire". A more accurate translation is "ghost", but it would not have had the same impact on the reading of some curious British readers (such as Bram Stoker, for example). In Stoker's sources, the anthropological perspective is not accurate enough. In the presentation of the funeral practices, Emily Gerard's perspective does not reflect the vision of the traditional community which she writes about, but rather her own position. In Gerard's description, certain elements may be associated with vampirism (the loss of blood of a vampire's victim, or the ways of destroying the ghost), but not the whole process can be subscribed to vampirism. However, Emily Gerard's "tag" of vampirism has no nuances at all.

The specialists who study Transylvanian folklore attest the belief in "strigoi", which is a supernatural being who resembles the ghost more than the vampire[4]. There are similarities and differences between the vampire and the "strigoi": a "strigoi" is a ghost who haunts the places where he lived. If for the vampire the act of sucking blood is essential, the strigoi may have marks of blood on his mouth, but the bite is never described.

The author of *Magyarland* also writes that the Romanian peasants believe "in ghosts, vampires, and changelings", and spend much of their time "in inventing charms against the machinations of the Devil" (II 129). She states that "the belief in witchcraft also is still prevalent in Transylvania, and more than one old woman was pointed out to us even by the enlightened 'Saxons' as being gifted with that art" (II 129).

During Harker's time in Transylvania, the English character oscillates between distance from and attraction towards superstition. From the very beginning his reserve towards the "whirlpool of superstitions" is transformed into curiosity to learn everything about such beliefs from the Count. The "superstitions" which he distrusts in the beginning save his life in Dracula Castle and then in other subsequent situations. The "superstitions" become the weapons of the *Crew of Light*: the fight and the final victory depend on them. In *Dracula* there is a great ambivalence in the attitude towards superstitions, as there is no border between superstition and religion. Coming back to Emily Gerard, we can see that one of the several chapters dedicated to the superstitions of Transylvania, in the book *The Land Beyond the Forest*, opens with a quotation from Grimm, which underlines the connection between religion and superstition: "superstition in all its multifariousness constitutes a species of religion applicable to all the common household necessities of daily life" (p. 188)[5].

[4] On the theme of the *strigoi* in Romanian folklore, see Otilia Hedeşan, *Pentru o mitologie difuză* and *Şapte eseuri despre strigoi* [For a diffuse mythology and Seven essays about ghosts].

[5] Stoker's working notes for *Dracula* do not prove that the novelist put down information from this book, but an interview with Stoker, (Jane Stoddard, *Mr. Bram Stoker. A Chat with the Author of Dracula*) shows that he was aware of this volume.

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Such an ambivalent attitude can also be found in Stoker's female predecessors (Gerard and Mazuchelli), who always feel fascinated with "superstitions", but try to show a rationalist attitude. In the beginning of Gerard's article, the author expresses her criticism towards the persistence of superstitions in Transylvania, but the tone in the end is different, showing that she enjoyed paying attention to these "superstitions" and is aware of their aesthetic value. Although touched by the latter, Gerard has to attach her perspective to a rationalist negative attitude:

> Superstition is an evil which every person with a well-balanced mind should wish to die out, yet it cannot be denied that some of these fancies are graceful and suggestive. Nettles and briars, albeit mischievous plants, may yet come in picturesquely in a landscape; and although the stern agriculturist is bound to rejoice at their uprooting, the softer-hearted artist is surely free to give them a passing sigh of regret (p. 150).

Such a critical attitude was in the line of the magazine *Nineteenth Century*, which expected a scientific tone and an overall perspective on the phenomena presented. In Gerard's book *The Land Beyond the Forest*, the superstition is more amply discussed than in her "introductory" article. Beyond the critical attitude expressed in the British magazine, one can often find sympathy and appreciation for the old Romanian customs[6]. Gerard prizes the "rich vein of their own [Romanians] folk-lore" and writes that Romanian literature should find its inspiration in rural practices, "bridging over the space which takes them back to ancient pagan traditions". The return to original myths is, according to Emily Gerard one of the tendencies which would enrich Romanian literature: "the old stones around them will begin to speak, and the old gods will let themselves be lured from out their hiding-places. Then will it be seen that Apollo's lyre has not ceased to vibrate, and the lays of ancient Rome will arise and develop to new life" (*The Land Beyond the Forest*: 173). This invitation to Romanian writers was taken into account by Bram Stoker, who, whether or not he read this fragment, investigated several legends of old and contemporary Europe, in order to create one of the strongest myths in the world: the vampire Dracula.

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[6] Teuceanu also admits that Emily Gerard's attitude towards the Romanians of Transylvania is different from her superficial predecessors.

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IMAGES OF DEVIL IN FOLK TRADITION OF THE CARPATHIAN UKRAINE (REGION OF VERHOVINA)

ANNA PLOTNIKOVA

My paper is based on my field investigation in a number of villages in the Carpathian Ukraine, in region of Verhovina in Mezhgorje's district: village Torun and two small villages near it – Prislop and Titkovtcy[1]. The broader toponim of this area is Zakarpatie, which means 'behind the Carpatian mountains' – from the point of view of Russia and Ukraine, in the direction from Russia to Ukraine, that is the territory neighboring Romania. Archaic features of the tradition of Zakarpatie are kept very well. It is important to emphasize that the main features of the whole folk tradition of Zakarpatie is quite different from the local traditions in other parts of Ukraine, for example, in Polesian Ukraine on the North of the country and also in the Southern Ukraine. The region of the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine is part of the great international Carpathian linguistic Atlas that includes all traditions of the Carpathians[2].

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[1] The field investigation was undertaken in March of 2008 during three days staying in villages (17 hours of audio-records done in accordance with the Ethnolinguistic Questionnaire). The members of the expedition in Verhovina were collaborators of the Institute for Slavic Studies (Russian Academy of Science) – Anna Plotnikova and Elena Uzeniova. The narrators, to whom we express our best gratitude, were: Foros I.V., born in 1964, educated (8 school grades and 3 secondary, specialized school gr.), (Prislop–Torun); Foros A.D., born in 1970, educated (8 school gr. and 3 secondary, specialized school gr.), (Torun); Folig A.Iu., born in 1933, without education (Torun); Zhaba A.V., born in 1937, educated (7 gr.), (Torun); Peskach V.M., born in 1940, educated (7 gr.), (Torun); Kurin M.F., born in 1952, educated (8 gr.), (Torun); Golovka E.M., born in 1933, without education (Prislop); Pozhar M.V., born in 1935, educated (7 gr.), (Prislop); Shkerebei I.M., born in 1947, educated (11 gr.), (Prislop); Kurin N.I., born in 1936, educated (7 gr.), (Prislop); Kurin M.F., born in 1933, educated (5 gr.), (Prislop); Dedar V.V., born in 1937, educated (4 gr.), (Prislop); Kochergan O.M., born in 1964, educated (10 school gr. and 4 secondary, specialized school gr.), (Prislop); Foros M.V., born in 1925, educated (6 gr.), (Titkovtcy); Foros A.F., born in 1930, educated (6 gr.), (Titkovtcy).

[2] *Общекарпатский диалектологический атлас*, 1, Кишинев, 1989; 2, Москва, 1994; 3, Warszawa, 1999; 4, Львів, 1993; 5, Bratislava, 1997; 6, Budapest, 2001; 7, Београд – Нови Сад, 2003. This Atlas is created in order to explore obvious coincidences in vocabulary between Carpathian and Balkan areas, so the atlas covers not only Ukrainian, Romanian, Hungarian, Slovakian and Polish Carpathian zones, but also Serbian, Macedonian and Bulgarian ones. There is a number of questions dealing with names of phenomena of traditional culture in the Atlas (most of them are concentrated in the forth issue published in Lviv: 1. Christmas (celebration); 2. **polaznik; *polaznička*; 5. **bosor- f; *bosor- m*; 6. *strigoi- and others).

REF/JEF, *1–2*, p. 91–97, Bucureşti, 2008

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The field investigation in region of Verhovina was undertaken by using the Ethnolinguistic Questionnaire [Materials for Ethnolinguistic Exploration of Balkan-Slavic Area], written by the author[3]. This questionnaire was primarily created for the purposes of the Small Dialectological Atlas of Balkan Languages, but later it was used for gathering field data in different countries and regions that are off of the geographical net of the Atlas mentioned above. In 1997-2007, during ten years, Serbian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Albanian and Greek villages were explored by different researchers, including the author of this paper. The Questionnaire was translated into Serbian and into Romanian. In 2007 some Romanian villages in the Carpathian Mountains were also explored: Mălaia commune, Vâlcea,[4] Sărata Monteoru (Merei commune) and Dara (Pietroasele commune), Buzău,[5] and after that – Mânzăleşti commune, Buzău[6]. In this context also the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine turned to be of great interest.

There is a section in the Questionnaire that deals with folk mythology. Questions there are about all kinds of vampire: vampire in the shape of an animal, of a man, of a shadow and so on; vampire in a period of the first 40 days after the death and afterwards; children born from vampire and possessing some power to struggle with vampire; demons coming from the souls of new-born, non-christened babies, from suicides. There are questions there about a man (or his soul) that has the possibility to turn into a wolf; about a demon which devours the Sun or the Moon, provoking eclipse; about demons of water, of air, of a forest; about demons-protectors of a house, of some pieces of land, and about the devil himself (its appearance, functions, places of location, places of meeting with him etc.)[7].

The questions are formulated in such a way that we have an opportunity to receive answers about the local dialectal name of the given phenomenon (for example: "What is the name of the dead that gets up from the coffin and harm people?"), and about extra-linguistic characteristics (what does it do, how does it look like, where does it inhabit etc.).

A great deal of answers in region of Verhovina were positive: in the local culture there are *dvodushnik* (demon with two souls: when one soul dies, other is alive, so it goes to do harm to people), *vovkun* (a man who has an ability to turn into a wolf and vice versa), *litavica* or *povitrulja* (a demon of wind: it flies with a wind and appears as a nice woman with long hair, more often men can see it), *sharkan'* (a harmfull dragon), *burivnik* (a man who can stop or provoke hail,

[3] Плотникова, Анна, *Материалы для этнолингвистического изучения балканославянского ареала*, Москва, 1996.

[4] The field investigation was fulfilled by Natalia Golant (Russian Etnographic Museum in Sankt-Petersburg), July-August 2006.

[5] The field investigation was undertaken by Anna Plotnikova (Institute for Slavic studies, RAN) and Constantin Secară ("Constantin Brăiloiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, RA), October 2007.

[6] The field investigation was fulfilled by Natalia Golant, January 2008.

[7] Плотникова, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–51.

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storm), *putnik* (night's devil who can turn into any animal and make a passer-by to lose his way), *domovyk* (a devil which helps in a household). But every separate demon is perceived as evil by the narrators themselves. In Ukranian language, as well as in Russian, the word, in a common sense, is *nechistaia sila* – "not pure" power, devil's power. There is also an exact equivalent in Romanian – *duh necurat.*

The closest to the idea of vampire in a European sense of this word – that is, supernatural blood sucking being – are the supernatural beings called *dvodushniki*, as well as some other one, without any name, which comes from the dead person. It is the soul of the dead that turns itself into a cat or any other animal that has crossed over the dead body while staying in the house. Thus, it is possible that after such an event the dead or a cat to appear among people, to enter the house, and frighten the relatives or even kill them. The morst frequent answer to the question "What will be if a cat jumps over the dead?" is that a *nechistyj duh*[8] in the form of a cat will walk in the house at nights or that the "soul of the dead turns into a cat and visits relatives".

Dvodushnik (from common Slavic word **duxia*, in Russian *dusha*, Ukr. *dushá* "soul" and the first part of the word is also Slavic word *dva* "two") may be some kind of wizard, named also *bosorkan'* (word taken from Hungarian language), with two souls or two hearts. After the death, as people say, "one of these souls walks among people", and the dead soul that comes back frightens and can kill some people.

Povitrulja (from Slavic word, in Russian *veter*, Ukr. *viter* "wind") is a whirlwind and simultaneously some kind of demon in female shape – beautiful woman called also *litavica*, from Slavic word, in Russian *letat'* ("fly", Ukr. *Lit* "flying"). Some people in Verhovina believe that in the whirlwind *povitrulja* souls of new-born and non-christened babies fly and cry. In order to escape this dangerous wind, a person who hears them must address them calling their names: "Go away... (for example, Maria or Agafia) to deserted places".

According to other beliefs from the village Torun', *povitrulja* or *litavica* (that is the same mythological character) comes every night to young people in the shape of a very nice girl with long-long hair, and torment them with her love. The fellow falls in love with her and little by little becomes insane. When a lot of *povitrula's* go throw the village they dance in a whirlwind, but nobody can see their dancing except of the fellow who is in connection with *povetrulja* (to whom she enters at night). The unlucky lad cannot say anybody about his connection with *povitrulja*, and finally dies from suffering. There is only one way to get rid of this demon (that is also classified by narrators as *nechistyi duh*, *poganyj duh* "malicious power"):[9] a person who notices the suffering of a fellow must take a candle and put it in a big pot. At night, this person must stay near the fellow with scissors, waiting

[8] Rom. *duh necurat, necuratul.*

[9] The terms denoting devil's power are synonyms nowadays in the villages: *nechistyi duh* = *poganyj duh* (Rom. *duh necurat*).

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for *povetrul'a* (*litavica*) to appear. This person with the scissors should not be afraid of *povetrul'a* and in the light of the candle must say: "I'll cut off your hair". After these words *povetrul'a* disappears for ever.

According to folk beliefs, *putnik* (from Slavic word, in Russian, Ukranian *put'* that means "way"), appears on the road at night near water (river, brook, swamp) and leads a passer-by somewhere far from the house. It can be seen in the image of a cat, of a dog or any animal, or of a man in red trousers. In this last case the devil is called *Oleksa u chervonyh gachah, Oleksa u krasnyh shtanah* "Alex in red trousers" instead of *chort* "devil", that is some kind of taboo upon the word *chort*. People also say that very often *putnik* mounts a man (a passer-by at night) in order to reach or cross a river or a brook; in this case a man feels something that is very heavy, but invisible on his back. Sometimes, doing such actions, the devil has a definite outward appearance, as a story puts it: a boy was late at the wedding celebration of his relatives; so, in a winter night he ran on his skies through the village to cross the river under the snow; suddenly a big cat jumped on his shoulders and stayed on his back until he reached the river; the cat then jumped down into the river in such a way that broke the ice and disappeared; the unlucky boy lost his skies and forgot about the wedding celebration, quickly returning home.

All narrators in village Torun and near it (Titkovtcy, Prislop) said that *putnik* is a devil who walks at night in various forms. If it looks like a man it is dressed very nice and solid, with necktie, but one can notice his hen's leg (or legs). On his way it attacks a man who forgets to make the sign of the cross and to say his prayers. There are a lot of places considered to be dangerous because of meeting with *putnic*. The devils have their favorite walk ways, and if somebody sleeps at night near water they throw him down into the river or swamp. The devils have their wedding at midnight (*chertivska svad'ba*, as the narrators say), so one can see their wedding that is very loud and also very dangerous for people until the first roster cry. *Putnic* also can enter a house, if the door is not closed, and strangles people.

Vovkun or *volkolak* (from Slavic word, **vьlkъ*, Russian *volk*, Ukr. *vovk* "wolf") is a man who has an ability to turn himself into a wolf; in this shape it is very dangerous to people. Typical story about this demon is similar to South-Slavic folk stories about the vampire transformed into a big dog. The subject of such stories is the following: a wife and her husband were in the field and arranged hay; then her husband went away to the forest for some time; at once a wolf jumped from the forest and attacked the woman; she escaped, but some part of her clothes remained in its teeth; when her husband came back, in his man shape, smiled, and at that moment his wife realized that her husband was *vovkun*, because she recognized the rag of her own dress in his teeth.

Domovyk (from Slavic word, in Russ., Ukr. *dom* "house") is a devil that brings prosperity to the house and comes out from the egg without yolk. A master who wishes to posses *domovyk* must hold this egg inside his shirt at the left shoulder for nine days before the day of Easter or for the whole Lent; when the

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priest, during service celebration, says: *Christos voskres!* ("Christ is arisen!"), the householder has to say: *I moi voskres* ("And mine one is arisen"). After these magic actions he receives the supernatural assistant for the housekeeping, that is, as a matter of fact, the devil that gives him richeness in all spheres of life but never leave him until his death. *Domovyk* will stay in that house after the death of the master too, so new inhabitants of the given house will be always frightened by him and never stay for a long time in this house. If the master possessing *domovyk* changes his house, the *domovyk*-devil will find him and kill him. One of my questions to the narrators was: "How does *domovyk* look like, for example, what does a strange person see in such a house?" The answer was: "One can see a cat, a snake or a very little man in red trousers". So, *domovyk* can appear in a form of a small animal, that is linked to a house in any way, the most wellknown are cat and snake. And this it is also considered malicious, devil's power, that is possessed by magic actions; unlike in Russian beliefs, according to which *domovik* stays in every house and helps or do harms to the cattle only if it does not like some horses or cows (if it likes them it helps: take care of them, plaits them braids in a mane)[10].

The appearance of the devil takes place in different shapes, including the type of vampire that is the soul of a dead person that appears after the death in order to harm people.

There is one difference between two kinds of walking dead. One sort of persons walking after the death or returning to their houses or neighboring houses are people which had some duty when they were alive, and they cannot do harm to people. For example, one woman had promised her neighbor flour; and after her death she was appearing in the house until relatives asked her why did she come, She told them about her duty, they gave her flour for the neighbor, thus the dead woman disappeared for ever. Another woman had a baby so after her death she returned at nights to swing the cradle with her baby. People in the villages say that the dead have no rest in the other world (the world of dead) or no calm "in a coffin" so they return to fulfill their duties. In order to get rid of them it is necessary to ask them if they praise the God: "Every being praises the God, and what about you?" If the answer is positive, people ask them about their wish and

[10] It is interesting to mention that Russian Old Believers in Romania (Rom. *ruşi-lipoveni*) up to now keep these beliefs about demon *domovik* (or *domovoi*), *dvorovik* (or *dvorovoi*), as my field investigations in villages Sarichioi, Jurilofka, Slava Rusă, Slava Cercheză, Carcaliu, Ghindăreşti, Mila 23, Sviştofka (2006-2008) show. (This exploration was done with a support of the "Constantin Brăiloiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore). The most part of the narrators in these villages consider it to be "bad", devil's power, but some answers show neutral attention to *domovik* (*domovoi*), *dvorovik* (or *dvorovoi*) especially in the cases when it helps to the horses in the household. Common Russian archaic expressions about keeping cattle in the household that take their origin from the attitude of *dvorovoi* toward the cattle exist untill nowadays: *po dvoru* (that means successful development of the definite units of cattle in the yard) or *ne po dvoru* (that means unfortunate staying of the definite units of cattle in the yard). These expressions are widespread in the villages of the Russian Old Believers in Romania.

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fulfill it. But if it is some kind of devil, it disappeares as soon as it hears the question (because it does not praise the God).

The other kind of dead that return after death are linked with the devil. More often they are *dvodushiks* with two souls: "one soul dies, other one walks"; "one soul that is pure (Rom. *curat*) goes to the God and other is walking around the village", because "one soul is given to this man by the God and the other one is given by the Devil named *Satana*". So, *dvodushnik* does harm to people after his death.

These beliefs are well known in the Carpathian Mountains, and not only in Ukraine but also in Poland. If we open the ethnolinguistic dictionary *Slavic antiquities* (that is done by the Institute for Slavic Studies in Moscow)[11], we can read in the article *Dvoiedushnik* that the Ukrainian and Polish vampire called *volkolak*, the Carpathian witch *bosorkan'a* and other mythological beings can come from people born with two souls. The main motive of all stories and beliefs of such kind relies on the capacities of that "second" soul: it is able to leave the body of a sleeping man and then to exist for some time independent (for the time of sleeping), in order to do harm to people. This soul turns into every kind of animal: it appears as a mouse, cat, fly and so on, as far as a wheel, a poker etc.[12]. In South-Slavic folk traditions we can observe the motives that are very close to the one linked with *dvodushnik*. A witch *veshtica* (Serbian word), a man that is half dragon, half man (Serbian *zmei*), Montenegrian supernatural man, woman or animal called *zduchach* (from Slavic word *duh*, *dusha*)[13] – all of them possess a demonic soul (not two souls as in the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine and Poland, but only one soul that is demonic). This soul leaves a body of a sleeping person and come to do supernatural actions. In the case of a man-*zmeu* or a man-*zduchach* these actions are positive: these supernatural beings protect their villages and lands from bad demons or demons that wish to conquest their lands, their crops and so on[14]. In the case of *veshtica* (witch, Rom. *stigoaică*, *vrăjitoare*) these actions are drastic: it eats babies, eats hearts and liver of youngsters, sucks babies blood. In all cases mentioned above the independent soul must return to the sleeping body. Otherwise the person dies.

We can observe many parallels not only within Eastern Slavic traditions (*vovkun*, *domovyk* are well known in other Ukranian regions, as well as in Bielorussia and Russia, of course with some other local peculiarities), but also with South-Slavic folk traditions. Besides the motives linked with *dvodushnik* it is also important to point out motives linked with *povitrulja (litavitca)* and *putnik*.

In South-Slavic traditions whirlwind is also considered to be a result of the appearance of very beautiful girls flying in the air – named in Bulgarian *samodiva*,

[11] *Славянские древности. Этнолингвистический словарь*, 1, Москва, 1995; 2, Москва, 1999; 3, Москва, 2004.

[12] *Ibidem*, vol. 2, pp. 29–31.

[13] Detailed description of these South-Slavic demons see in: Плотникова, Анна, *Этнолингвистическая география Южной Славии*, Москва, 2004.

[14] *Ibidem*, pp. 222–231, 660–665.

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samovila, and in Serbian, *vila*[15]. They have long hair and like to fall in love with young men. One of their main functions is dancing in a circle (Serbian *kolo*, Bulgarian *horo*), near water-sources. Their dancing is very often considered to be the cause for whirlwind.

As far as functions and places of appearance of *putnik* are concerned, similar motives are observed in South-Slavic traditions: one can lose his way in definite places near the village, especially near water-sources, if meets with *osenja, osanja, omaja* (East-Serbian)[16]. One can meet also the devil's wedding, but in South-Slavic traditions devils very often invite the passer-by to join them and after the rosters crying the passer-by founds himself in a swamp with a skull of a horse in his hands instead of the wine vessel. In Balkan-Slavic regions, especially in villages of Macedonia and Eastern Serbia, a function of saddling a passer-by belongs to vampire and to all demons that are some kind of devil: *karakondzul, osenja, omaja* and so on.

To conclude I am to say that in the investigated villages of Verhovina the devil itself (Ukr., Russian *diavol*) is more dangerous than any walking dead person. As the narrators say, in the past people could see the devil itself very often. There are many stories about the devil entering into an open house. Consequently, in Torun, Titkovtcy and Prislop every house must be closed in the evening by bolt or locker. If the devil accidentally enters the house it begins to look for people; in this case all kind of protection means are used: people try to deceive the devil compelling it to weave a rope or string in order it will go out, behind the door, during this action. And this is the most known way of getting rid of it. People may also go round the house with a fire, and then also say specific prayers, asking for help, or put a candle in the center of any kind of circle etc.

All beliefs and mythological stories registered in 2008 in villages of Verhovina in the Carpathian Mountains of Ukraine are of great use for the investigation of folk mythology in a comparative manner: the aspect of the common roots and typological similarities with the other folk traditions, in Slavic and non-Slavic (first of all the Carpathians and the Balkans) areas.

[15] *Ibidem*, pp. 199–212, 616–624, 628–632.

[16] Плотникова, Анна, *Мифологическая лексика сербско-болгарского пограничья*, in *Исследования по славянской диалектологии*, 10 (Терминологическая лексика материальной и духовной культуры балканских славян), Москва, 2004.

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ELEMENTS DE LA CULTURE FOLKLORIQUE DES GAGAOUZES

HARUN GÜNGÖR

Pour pouvoir parler de la culture et du folklore des Gagaouzes[1] il faut tout d'abord définir qui sont les Gagaouzes, d'où ils viennent, où et de quoi ils vivent aujourd'hui.

Apparaissant pour la premier fois sur la scène de l'histoire au XIII[e] siècle, les Gagaouzes descendent des Petchenègues, Oghuz et Koumans qui, en suivant le sultan seldjouk Kay Ka'us, avaient émigré dans la Dobroudja. Descendants donc de ces Turcs christianisés, les Gagaouzes ont en grande majorité émigrés en Bessarabie à partir de 1770 alors qu'un petit nombre est resté en Bulgarie et en 1812 se sont installés dans la région de Dobrouja. Les Gagaouzes qui vivent aujourd'hui en Gagaouzie *Gagauz Yeri*, au sud de la Moldavie (Bujak) constituent une population d'environ 147.500 âmes. Ils représentent 4.4% de la population de la Moldavie. Environ 40.000 Gagaouzes vivent en Ukraine[2]. On trouve par ailleurs des Gagaouzes au Kazakhstan, au Kirghizstan, en Ouzbékistan, en Grèce et en Turquie.

Avant de discuter du folklore des Gagaouzes il serait bon de mentionner les ouvrages de références concernant cette population et en particulier les œuvres de Valentin Aleksandroviç Moşkov, Mihail Ciachir et Atanas I. Manov.

Le livre de Moşkov intitulé *Gagauzi Benderskogo Uezda* (*Etnografiçeskie oçerki i materiali*) [Les Gagaouzes dans la province de Bender] traite de la langue, du folklore, de l'histoire et de la religion des Gagaouzes. Ce livre fut réédité à Chişinău en 2004 par deux chercheurs Gagaouzes, Stepan S. Bulgar et Stepan S. Kuroglo. Le second livre de V. A. Moşkov concernant les Gagaouzes s'intitule: *Turetskie Plemena na Balkanskom Poluostrove* [Les Peuples turcs dans la péninsule balkanique] (Saint Petersbourg 1904). Ce livre fut réédité par Stepan Bulgar qui l'agrémenta d'illustrations. Ce même livre fut traduit par le turcologue tchuvache Alona Ivanova sous le titre *Balkan Yarımadasında Türk Kavimleri*

[1] Cet article a été presenté à l'occasion du rencontre „Atatürk – Iorga dönemindeki. Türk-Romen kültür ilişkileri" (organisé de l'Atatürk Kültür Merkezi et de l'Institute Culturel Roumaine „Dimitrie Cantemir" en Istanbul), qui a eut lieu en Ankara, le 17–18 avril, 2008.

[2] *Moldova in Figures: Statistical pocket-book,* 2007, http://www.statistica.md/publications/154/en/Mold_in_cifre2007_breviar_en_fr.pdf, 12.05.2007, p. 10.

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[Les Peuples turcs dans la péninsule balkanique] (Elazığ 2000); on y ajoutât la traduction de la partie du livre *Das Fursthentum Bulgarien* de l'historien tcheque Constantin Jireçek concernant les Gagaouzes/Sorgouj. En dehors du livre de V.A. Moşkov, le livre de Atanas İ. Manov, *Porekloto na gagauzite: Teknite obiçai i naravi* (Varna 1938) constitue une importante source d'information concernant la culture des Gagaouzes.

Un autre ouvrage de référence concernant l'histoire et la culture des Gagaouzes est celui de Mihail Ciachir (1861–1938), *Basarabiealâ Gagauzlarân İstorieasâ* [L'Histoire des Gagaouzes de Bessarabie] (Chisinau 1934). L'exemplaire de ce livre que Ciachir envoya à Atatürk se trouve aujourd'hui dans la bibliothèque privée située dans le mausolée d'Atatürk, enregistré sous la côte 1814. D'après le témoignage de Nicolae Ciachir, Mihail Ciachir aurait eu l'intention de rendre visite à Atatürk mais à la suite du décès de ce dernier la même année, cette visite ne put avoir lieu. Nous avons transcrit en turc le livre de Ciachir et l'avons publié en 1988.

On peut citer également la thèse de doctorat de l'historien Roumain d'origine Gagaouze Mihail Guboglu, *Găgăuzii în lumina istoriei* [Les Gagaouzes dans la lumière de l'histoire]. Malheureusement, cet mémoire qui, d'après les informations qu'il nous a fourni, constitue environ 600 pages, n'a pas été publié.

Certes ces quelques travaux cites ci-dessus sont loin de constituer l'ensemble des ouvrages traitant des Gagaouzes. En fait nous avons fait mention de ces quelques livres parce qu'ils étaient les plus représentatifs.

On peut constater que la culture des Gagaouzes se base essentiellement sur trois éléments :

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1. La culture turque centrale asiatique;
2. Le christianisme;
3. Les peuples voisins de la géographie dans laquelle ils vivent (Roumains, Bulgares, Russes, Grecs etc.).

Cette situation dota la culture des Gagaouzes d'un caractère syncrétique.

Bien que, d'après Mihail Ciachir, les Gagaouzes sont „...tous de bons chrétiens"[3] qui „pratiquent la religion orthodoxe"[4], ils utilisent des termes islamiques tels que *Allah/Alla* (Dieu), Il faut noter que les Gagaouzes n'emploient pas le terme *Tenri/Tanrı* pour désigner *Dieu*, alors que celui-ci est communément utilisé dans tout le reste du monde turcophone. Parmis des autres mots particuliers on peut compter: *Allahlık* (animal sacrifié), *Cennet* (Paradis), *Cendem* (Enfer), *Ahiret* (l'au-delà), *Oruç* (le jêune), *Hac* (le pélerinage), *Hacı* (pélerin), *Haram* (interdit), *Helal* (autorisé), *Kurban* (sacrifice), *Şeytan* (Satan) *etc.*[5] Les Gagaouzes célèbrent la fête du *Ay Görgi* (Saint-Georges), qu'ils appellent *Hederlez* (Hızır-İlyaz = Hıdırellez, chez les musulmans) et qui représente une fête célébrée dans toute la géographie balkanique comme une sorte de fête du printemps[6].

Dans la culture religieuse des Gagaouzes la pratique religieuse qui attire l'attention est sans aucun doute le rituel du sacrifice. Les Gagaouzes pratique le sacrifice en toute occasion. Le sacrifice votif (oblation), le sacrifice du *Steonoz* lors du mariage, le *Hederlez*, le *Allahlık*, les sacrifices pratiqués pour le bien être de l'église, du village, de la maison et des animaux, le sacrifice pratiqué pour mettre fin a la sécheresse, le sacrifice pratiqué pour l'expiation des péchés. Mais il faut par ailleurs noter qu'il y a des différences en ce qui concerne la terminologie religieuse utilisée et les pratiques du sacrifice entre les Gagaouzes qui vivent en Bulgarie et ceux qui vivent en Moldavie.

Bien que les Gagaouzes consomment le porc, ils ne le sacrifie pas dans un sense religieux, comme ils n'en sacrifient non plus le cheval. Il faut préciser que les Gagaouzes sacrifient seulement les animaux de sexe mâle et non pas des femelles. Pendant le rituel du sacrifice on prient pour les saints, on jette sur l'animal sacrificiel de l'eau bénit apportée de l'église et on lui fait manger du sel sanctifié. On peut constater que cette pratique s'est développé sous l'influence du christianisme. Une autre pratique sacrificielle qui attire l'attention est le sacrifice du coq, que les Gagaouzes pratiquent pour la bonne santé des enfants[7].

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[3] Mihail Ciachir, *Basarabiealâ Gagauzlarân İstorieasâ* [L'historie des Gagaouzes de Bessarabie], Chişinău, 1934, p. 3.

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 14.

[5] Harun Güngör, *Gagavuzların Hıristiyanlığı kabulü ve İnanışlarındaki İslami Unsurlar Meselesi* [Le problème de l'acceptation du christianisme par les Gagaouzes et les éléments islamiques dans leurs croyances], Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları, 27 Aralık 1983, pp. 246–254.

[6] Olivier Givre, *Un rituel "balkanique" ou un rituel dans les Balkans?*, Paris, 2006, pp. 75–76.

[7] Elizaveta Kvilinkova, *Gagauz Kurbanı: Region Özellikleri hem etnokultura Paralelleri* [Le sacrifice chez les gagaouzes: les caractéristiques régionales et le parallélisme ethno-culturel], Saba Yıldızı, Komrat, No. 38/2007, p. 19.

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Les Gagaouzes croient en l'existence d'une multitude de créatures mythologiques comme les *Cadı* (sorcière), *Peri* (fée), *Taun* (peste), *Meçikli* (diablotin), *Tılsım* (talisman), *Albastı*, *Tepegöz* (Cyclope) etc.[8] La plus remarquable figure parmi ceux-ci est sans doute le personnage de Tepegöz. On trouve chez les Gagaouzes beaucoup de légendes concernant le personnage de Tepegöz que l'on retrouve dans les contes de Dede Korkut. Voici l'un de ces récits:

„Il y avait deux frères qui avec leurs moutons s'en allèrent dans la prairie et apercevant Tepegöz laissant de côté les moutons fuirent. Tepegöz attrapa l'un de ces enfants et l'avala. Et l'autre se faufila parmi les moutons et se vêtit de la peau qui se trouvait sur l'âne. Cela se passait pendant la nuit. L'enfant se mélangea aux moutons et Tepegöz ne le reconnut pas. Tepegöz dit a l'enfant : «Cuisine moi du foie!» et c'est ainsi que l'enfant pris du sel et le jeta à ses yeux et son œil creva. Tepegöz dit : «C'est cet enfant qui a pris ma bague» et la bague commença à crier : «Vient par ici!». L'enfant fuyait et Tepegöz le poursuivait. L'enfant essayait de sortir la bague mais n'y parvenant pas coupa son doigt et le jeta dans la fontaine. Tepegöz plongea dans la fontaine et le berger put enfin se libérer de Tepegöz[9]."

Dans la culture des Gagaouzes on accorde également une place importante aux mariages et à leurs célébrations. Mais les Gagaouzes ne pratiquent pas de cérémonie de mariage:

a) le mardi, le jeudi et le vendredi;
b) pendant le jeune de la Pâques qu'ils appellent «le grand jeune»;
c) pendant le jeune du Noël;
d) pendant le jeune de la Vierge Marie;
e) pendant les jeunes de Pierre et Paul;
f) un jour avant le sacrifice de Jean le Baptiste;
g) un jour avant la libération de la croix.

En dehors de ces jours on peut célébrer le mariage à n'importe quel moment de l'année.

Si les familles du garçon et de la fille se mettent d'accord le mariage se déroule normalement. Mais dans le cas contraire on enlève la fille. On appelle cela *kaçkın*. Si la fille est enlevée malgré son gré on qualifie cet acte de *kavrama*[10].

La chasteté est essentielle pour le mariage. On n'organise pas de réjouissance pour le mariage des veuves et des filles mûris, qu'on appelle *kalık*.

Le cadet de la famille reste dans le foyer paternel. Quant aux grands frères, après leur mariage ils quittent le foyer pour former le leur. La demeure paternelle est intégralement léguée au cadet.

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[8] Atanas I. Manov, *Porekloto na gagauzite: Teknite obiçai i naravi*, Varna, 1938, pp. 64–77.

[9] V.A. Moşkov, *Nareçiya Bessarabskih Gagauzov, Radloff*, Probern Bd 10, Saint Petersbourg, 1904, pp. 37–39. Cf. Harun Güngör, *Gagauzlar'da Tepegöz Efsanesi* [La légende de Cyclope chez les Gagaouzes], in *Türk Kültürü araştırmaları*, Ankara, 1986, p. 142.

[10] Harun Güngör – Mustafa Argunşah, *Gagauz Türkleri, Tarih, Dil, Folklor ve Halk Edebiyatı* [Les turcs Gagaouzes, histoire, langue, folklore et littérature populaire], Ankara, 2002, p. 94.

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Un autre élément important dans la culture des Gagaouzes concerne bien évidemment les conceptions relatives à la mort, les rituels funéraires et la construction des tombes. Pour désigner le défunt, au lieu du terme *öldü* (il/elle est mort/e) les Gagaouzes emploient l'expression *geçindi* (il/elle est passé/e)[11]. On qualifie le mort de *raametli.*

Le cri de la chouette, les comportements irréguliers des animaux, certains événements vus dans les rêves et certains phénomènes météorologiques (étoiles filantes par exemple) sont considérés comme l'annonciateur de la mort.

Apres le décès on offre aux visiteurs une sorte de pâtisserie appelée *koliva* et du vin.

En contrepartie de l'emplacement ou va être enterré le mort dans le cimetière on paye la somme symbolique de 1 leu. Cette croyance qui continue d'exister dans la culture turque de l'Asie Centrale est directement liée à la conception du *yer iyesi* = propriétaire du lieu.

On enterre le mort à l'intérieur d'un cercueil dans la tombe creusée en forme rectangulaire. Il est intéressant de noter que les Gagaouzes mettent de l'argent dans la poche du mort avant de l'enterrer. Cet argent est destiné aux anges qui couperaient la route du mort vers le paradis dans l'au-delà[12].

On se remémore le décédé le neuvième, vingtième et quarantième jour de sa mort. On offre à son honneur du pain de vie et un repas *Pomana*[13] Le deuil dure 40 jours.

Alors qu'une personne décédée avant la Pâques est considérée comme pécheresse, celle qui meurt le jour de la Pâques est considérée comme un/e bon/ne chrétien/ne.

Ceux qui meurent à la suite d'un suicide sont enterrés à l'extérieur du cimetière.

Moşkov, qui visita la Trace en 1902, a déterminé sur les pierres tombales des Sorgouciç/Gagaouzes des figures représentants le métier du décédé. Nous avons-nous même publié des pierres tombales du même genre que nous avons découvert dans la même région en 1992 lors de notre enquête sur le terrain[14]. En revanche à l'issu de l'expédition scientifique que nous avons effectuée la même année en Moldavie, bien qu'ayant trouvé dans les plus anciens cimetières des villages Gagaouzes des pierres tombales a caractère anthropomorphique, nous avons constaté que les figures de ces pierres tombales représentaient des symboles religieux plutôt que le métier du décédé/e[15].

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[11] Abdulkerim Dinç, *Gagauzlar (Birkaç yazı, makale ve tebliğler)* [Les Gagaouzes (Quelques notes, articles et communications)], Aralık, 2005, p. 27.

[12] Dinç, p. 37.

[13] S. S. Kuroglo, *Semeynaya obryadnost Gagauzov (v XIX-Naçale XX.v.)*, Chişinău, 1980, p. 113.

[14] Harun Güngör, *Gagauz/ Sorguç Mezartaşları* [Les pierres tombales chez les Gagaouzes/ Sourguci], in *Türk Bodun Bilimi Araştırmaları*, İstanbul, 2004, pp. 176–182.

[15] *Ibidem.*

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On présente ses condoléances aux proches du défunt de cette sorte: *Allah rahmet eylesin, toprağı elin/hafif olsun*! (Que Dieux lui accorde sa miséricorde! Que sa terre soit légère!)

Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, on se remémore le décédé 9, 20 et 40 jours après sa mort. En ces occasions on prépare des repas que l'on offre. La petite Pâques (le 13 mai) représente également le jour des morts. C'est pourquoi ce jour venu, on fait le nettoyage est l'entretient des tombes et des cimetières. Par ailleurs on prépare des pains que l'on distribue pour «le bien» (hayır) du décédé.

Les Gagaouzes qui se représentent l'esprit comme étant semblable à un oiseau, au vent, à un papillon ou à la fumée etc. croient que l'esprit tourne autour de la maison pendant 40 jour après la mort. Pour cette raison on allume les lumières et des bougies dans la maison du décédé et on allume également des bougies et du feu sur la tombe afin que l'esprit du décédé s'apaise et se purifie de ses péchés.

Si l'un de ses proches voit le décédé dans son rêve, il leurs raconte comment il l'a vu. Et ceux-la selon la description du décédé dans son rêve, distribuent aux pauvres du cartier ou du village, de la farine, de l'argent, du pain, du tissu ou des vêtements.

D'après Ciachir, la langue des Gagaouzes est pauvre et ne possède pas de littérature[16]. C'est pourquoi le long des siècles les Gagaouzes ont transmis oralement leurs désirs, leurs espoirs et leurs pensées de génération en génération.

[16] Mihail Ciachir, *Dicţionar Găgăuzo(Tiurco)-Român*, Chişinău, 1938, p. 5.

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L'activité économique des Gagaouzes se base principalement sur l'agriculture et l'élevage. On en trouve donc des traces dans le folklore et la littérature des Gagaouzes. Il y a par exemple dans le folklore des Gagaouzes de Moldavie une pièce qu'on appelle *les noces du porc*. Dans cette pièce, la fille ayant l'âge du mariage demande que le garçon qu'elle va épouser ne soit pas un berger mais agriculteur[17].

Moşkov raconte que les Gagaouzes forment de grandes rondes pour danser le *Horu/Horon*. Quant à Ciachir, après avoir remarqué que les chansons Gagaouzes sont parfois courtes (*mani*) et parfois longues (*türkü*), il précise que ces longues chansons (*türkü*) sont pleines de tristesse, de chagrin et de colère, et ceci témoigne des souffrances endurées[18].

CONCLUSION

La religion est l'élément essentiel dans la formation et constitution de la culture des Gagaouzes. La religion, qui a subit une forte pression pendant l'époque de l'Union Soviétique, commença a refleurir après la chute du régime communiste sur le plan social au profit du Protestantisme. De nos jours, le baptisme, l'adventisme, le méthodisme, le protestantisme et les témoins de Jéhovah – que Mihail Ciachir qualifie de "mauvaise religions" – déploient une intense activité dans les villes et villages des Gagaouzes et y trouvent un bon nombre d'adeptes. Quant à la littérature des Gagaouzes (qui ne débute qu'en 1957, avec Mihail Ciachir), elle commença à prospérer après l'adoption d'un alphabet adapté pour la langue gagaouze. Aujourd'hui un grand nombre de livres, de revues, de journaux sont publies par les Gagaouzes. Un changement capital dans la culture des Gagaouzes fut produit par le changement du système économique. Actuellement, par exemple, les filles ne préfèrent plus les agriculteurs en tant qu'époux. C'est pourquoi on n'assiste plus au "noces du porc". Le fait que les femmes émigrent à l'étranger pour trouver du travail a produit des changements radicales dans les coutumes et traditions relatifs à l'éducation des enfants, à la structure familiale et au mariage[19]. Confrontée à la culture urbaine et à la culture planétaire en générale, la culture des Gagaouzes subit les influences de ceux-ci. En bref, la culture des Gagaouzes n'est plus celle de jadis, mais dans une continuité changeante.

[17] Mihail Ciachir, *Basarabyalı Gagauzların Tarihi* [Histoire des Gagaouzes de Bessarabie], Niğde (Ed. Harun Güngör), 1988, p. 60.

[18] *Ibidem*, p. 65.

[19] Voir par exemple Leyla J. Keough, *Globalizing 'Postsocialism: Mobile Mothers and Neoliberalism on the Margins of Europe*, in "Anthropological Quarterly", Volume 79, Number 3, Summer 2006, pp. 431–461.

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ILLUSORY FIRE IN JAPANESE FOLKTALES: *KITSUNE-BI, TENGU-BI, ONI-BI, HOSHI NO TAMA*

RALUCA NICOLAE

ABSTRACT

Illusory fire (*ignis fatuus*) is present in many folktales and legends under different names: *will-o'-the whisp, Jack-o'-lantern, luz mala, corpse light*, etc., but Japanese folklore shows a particular interest in the illusory feature of light due to the Buddhist mentality according to which the reality is nothing but a illusion. Badgers and especially foxes, belonging to *obake/bakemono* (transforming things) class, can emit light: a *kitsune* (fox) keeps the ball in its mouth or carries it on its tail etc. *Kitsune no yome-iri* (a foxes' wedding) is a nocturnal display of lamps and lanterns created with *kitsune-bi* (fox fire). Except *kitsune-bi*, and partially, *tanuki-bi* (badger fire), there are also *tengu-bi* (*tengu's* fire), *oni-bi* (demon's fire), and *hitodama*, the souls of (dead) people manifesting as green blue or red fire balls. In Japanese tales, the illusory fire stands for: the souls of either the dead or the living; life force, vitality; guidance (uncommon); brightness as beauty; light as playful, tricky or mischievous. Fire means (visual) attraction, as well as distraction. The shift from attraction to distraction, from guidance (to show the way out of the woods) to temptation (balls of light misguiding the traveller in order to steal the fish out of his net) brings about the illusory feature in the flame, emphasized by the game-like component that causes deceit and mischief.

Keywords: will-o'-the-wisp; Japanese folktales; attraction; distraction; illusion.

Found in many folktales, will-o'-the-wisp[1] is a mysterious light associated

[1] Unexplained lights have been reported under a variety of names, such as: Arbyrd/Senath Ghost Light of Missouri; Bragg Road ghost light (Light of Saratoga) of Texas; Brown Mountain Lights of North Virginia, Cohoke Light of Virginia; Corpse Light or Corpse Candle (in Scotland and late 19th and early 20th century Newfoundland); Dwaallicht, meaning "wandering light" in Dutch, luring people deep into peat bogs for no apparent reason; Feux Follets, literally "Merry Fires" in French and French-Canadian folklore. Despite the cheerful-sounding name, in French-Canadian folklore Feux Follets were believed to be the damned spirits of criminals or bad Catholics who served Satan and sometimes worked in concert with Loup garou or Werewolf, in pursuit of wayward souls; Foxfire; Friar's Lantern; Hinkypunk in the Newfounland; Kitty-with-a-Wick in Cornish folklore; *Kolli vai pisaasu* – a Tamil term used to describe a ghost (*pisaasu*) with burning embers (*kolli*) in its mouth (*vai*); Lidérk, a demon of Hungarian folklore that flies at night in the form of fiery light, scattering flames; Luz Mala, meaning "evil light" in Argentina and some parts of South America. They are believed to be wandering, malevolent ghosts; *Lyktemenn* (Norwegian) or *lyktgubbar* (Swedish), meaning "men with torches"; *Min-min*: a term used by some Australian Aborigine societies to describe atmospheric phenomena similar to ball lightning or Will o' the Wisps; at one time believed to be the spirits of lost (or stillborn) children. As in many other cultures, the *Min-min* were believed to be dangerous to human beings, especially young children; Mekong lights (Nekha lights) in

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with spirits. The will-o'-the-wisp or *ignis fatuus*[2] refers to the ghostly lights sometimes seen at night or twilight. It looks like a flickering lamp, and is sometimes said to recede if approached. Much folklore surrounds the legend, but science has offered several potential explanations[3].

The term will-o'-the-wisp comes from "wisp", a bundle of hay or straw sometimes used as a torch, and will-o' ("Will of"). In Lancashire folk speech, it is called either Jack-o'-lantern (Jack of the lantern) or Peg-o'-lantern, according to its local concept of its sex. These lights are also sometimes referred to as "corpse candles" or "hobby lanterns". They are the proverbial misleaders of belated travellers who fall into swamp and marshes and are drowned. In Ireland the phenomenon is called Jack of the bright light (*Seán na gealaige*) or William with the little flame (*Liam na lasóige*). It is commonly believed to be the wandering soul of one who has been refused entrance in both heaven and hell[4].

The names "will-o'-the-wisp" and "jack-o'-lantern" are found in some old folktales, retold in different forms across Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales, Appalachia and Newfoundland. There is an Irish version called *Drunk Jack* or *Stingy Jack* in which the protagonist makes a deal with the Devil, offering up his soul in exchange for payment of his pub tab. When the Devil comes to collect his

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Thailand; Peg-a-Lantern in Lancashire; Jenny-with-the-lantern in Northumbria and Yorkshire; Spunkie (a Scottish name used in the Scottish Lowlands); Vettelys is another name given to Will o' the Wisp in Norway, having the literal meaning of "Vette's Candle", the Vette being a kind of goblin of dwarfish stature, believed to dwell in mounds; "Virvatuli", "flickering fire" and *aarnivalkea* "treasure fire" are amongst the many Finnish names for this phenomenon. It is also called *liekkiö* ("flamey") when it is believed to be a ghost of a murdered child; Walking Fire; *gwei-huo* in Chinese, literally meaning "ghost fire". Often seen in graveyards or other places where dead bodies gather; *Žaltvykslė*, the Lithuanian for Will o' Wisp, it translates roughly as "blinking green light"; *oni-bi*, Japanese for Will o' Wisp, it translates to "ghost/demon fire". It's sometimes associated with or mistaken for the trickster *hitodama* or "human soul", blue or green floating balls of fire assumed to be souls of people with unfinished business. Other Japanese myths consider the phenomenon a trick of the *kitsune*, employing their "fox-fire" (*kitsune-bi*) to lead travellers astray. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_o'_the_wisp).

[2] Modern Latin, from *ignis* – "fire" and *fatuus* – "foolish"; plural *ignes fatui* – cf. *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, (Maria Leach ed.), San Francisco, Harper and Row Publishers, 1984, p. 535.

[3] One possible naturalistic and scientific explanation for such phenomena is that the oxidation of hydrogen phosphide and methane gases produced by the decay of organic material may cause glowing lights to appear in the air. Critics claim that this theory does not easily account for reported cases which claim lights bob, swoop, soar upwards or downwards, or move against the wind. Others believe bioluminescent effects (e.g., honey fungus) cause the light. Other explanations include causes similar to ball lightning. Derr & Persinger put forward the theory that earth lights may be generated by tectonic strain. Paul Devereux's explanation, however, is much broader. He thinks that the link between the lights and the landscape is more tenuous. He says that they are probably related to many things: tectonic strain, weather conditions, local geography, ley lines, terrain, water table depth and so forth. This explanation, however, is rejected by most experts as highly unscientific. Another theory was put forward claiming these lights are barn owls with luminescent plumage. Hence the possibility of them floating around, reacting to other lights, etc. – cf. http://encyclopedia.bcz.com/en/Will-o'-the-wisp; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_o'_the_wisp.

[4] *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, p. 535.

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due, Jack tricks him by making him climb a tree and then carving a cross underneath, preventing him from climbing down. In exchange for removing the cross, the Devil forgives Jack's debt. However, as no one as bad as Jack would ever be allowed into Heaven, Jack is forced upon his death to travel to Hell and ask for a place there. The Devil denies him entrance in revenge, but, as a boon, grants Jack an ember from the fires of Hell to light his way through the twilight world to which lost souls are forever condemned. Jack places it in a carved turnip to serve as a lantern[5]. One version refers to Will the Smith, a wicked blacksmith who is given a second chance by Saint Peter at the gates to Heaven, but leads such a bad life that he ends up being doomed to wander the Earth. The Devil provides him with a single burning coal with which to warm himself, which he then used to lure foolish travellers into the marshes[6].

In Gaelic and Slavic folk cultures, the will-o'-the-wisps are held to be mischievous spirits of the dead or other supernatural beings attempting to lead travellers astray. Sometimes they are believed to be the spirits of unbaptized or stillborn children, flitting between heaven and hell.

Danes, Finns, Estonians and Latvians believed that a will-o'-the-wisp marked the location of a treasure[7] deep in ground or water, which could be taken only when the fire was there. Sometimes magical tricks were required as well, to uncover the treasure. In Finland and other northern countries it was believed that midsummer was the best time to search for will-o'-the-wisps and treasures below them. It was believed that when someone hid treasure in the ground, (s)he made the treasure available only at the midsummer, and set will-o'-the-wisp to mark the exact place and time so that (s)he could come to take the treasure back. Finns also believed that the creature guarding the treasure used fire to clean precious metals bright again.

The will-o'-the-wisp can be found in numerous folktales around the British Isles, and is often a malicious character in the stories. A peasant travelling home at dusk spots a bright light travelling along ahead of him. Looking closer, he sees that the light is a lantern held by a "dusky little figure", which he follows for several miles. All of a sudden he finds himself standing on the edge of a vast chasm with a roaring torrent of water rushing below him. At that precise moment the lantern-carrier leaps across the gap, lifts the light high over its head, lets out a malicious laugh and blows out the light, leaving the poor peasant a long way from home, standing in pitch darkness at the edge of a precipice[8]. There are some tales told

[5] *Irish Foktales*, (Henry Glassie ed.), Toronto, Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Library, 1985, pp. 311–313; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_o'_the_wisp#_ref-6.

[6] http://www.buzzle.com/articles/history-jacko-lantern-irish-tale-halloween.html

[7] Similar beliefs are found in Romanian folktales and legends about places above which a blue or green flame is floating, marking the spot of a treasure – cf. Tony Brill, *Tipologia legendei populare româneşti* [Typology of the Romanian Popular Legend], vol. 2, Bucureşti, Saeculum I.O., 2006, pp. 104–126.

[8] Wirt Sikes, *British Goblins: Welsh Folk Lore, Fairy Mythology, Legends and Traditions*, London, Kessinger Publishing Co, 2003, p. 22.

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about the will-o'-the-wisp being guardians of treasure, much like the Irish leprechaun leading those brave enough to follow them to sure riches. Other stories tell of travellers getting lost in the woodland and coming upon a will-o'-the-wisp, and depending on how they treated the will-o'-the-wisp, the spirit would either get them lost further in the woods or guide them out.

In Indonesia, especially Central Java, the light is known as *Gandaspati*, a wicked spirit in flame that can take the form a dragon. Supposedly the spirit causes the death of whoever touches it[9].

The Japanese world of the supernatural comprises a dizzying array of characters, from the humorously bizarre to the downright terrifying. In the 18th century, Toriyama Sekien[10] attempted to categorize the many different types of ghostly beings that inhabit the Japanese landscape, its heavens and its hells[11]:

- *obake/bakemono*: literally, "transforming thing", referring to any type of preternatural being; it comprises *yōkai* and *yūrei*, and can also be used more generally to refer to anything that is weird or grotesque: *kitsune* (fox), *tanuki* (badger) etc.;
- *yōkai*: literally, "bewitching apparition", encompassing a wide spectrum of ghouls, goblins and monsters, some frightening, some amusing, and many bizarre. *Yōkai* usually appear at dawn or dusk: *tengu*, *kappa*, *rokuro kubi*, etc.;
- *yūrei*: literally, "dim/hazy/faint spirit", referring to the spirits of the dead who remain among the living for a specific purpose, usually to seek vengeance. *Yūrei* generally appear between 2 and 3 AM;
- *oni*: "demons" or "ogres"; ferocious creatures with horns and fangs that are best known for manning the gates of the various Buddhist hells and performing some of the tortures that take place in them.

Obake[12], the Japanese "ghosts" are one sort of thing that mutates into another, one phenomenon that experiences shift and alteration, one meaning that becomes unstuck and twisted into something else. *Obake* undermine the certainties of life as we usually understand it.

Obake reflect and remind us of the inherent mutability in the world around us. At the same time, the elements of the observable world that appear particularly prone

[9] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_o'_the_wisp

[10] Toriyama Sekien (1712–1788) was a print artist of the genre *ukiyo-e* who specialised in *yōkai*. He was the teacher of Utamaro. In the 1780s, Sekien undertook a thorough study of the Japanese supernatural beings. The result was his *Hyakki Yakkō* series (*Night Parade of One Hundred Demons*), on which his posthumous fame lies. The first volume appeared in 1781, under the title *The Illustrated Night Parade of a Hundred Demons* (*Gazu Hyakki Yakō*). Three more volumes followed: *The Illustrated One Hundred Demons from the Present and the Past* (*Konjaku Gazu Zoku Hyakki*), *Supplement to The Hundred Demons from the Present and the Past* (*Konjaku Hyakki Shūi*), and *The Illustrated Bag of One Hundred Random Demons* (*Gazu Hyakki Tsurezure-bukuro*). – cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toriyama_Sekien).

[11] http://www.spi.com.sg/spi_files/shinto_shrine/japanese_ghosts.htm

[12] *O-* is an honorific prefix, while *bake* is a noun from *bakeru*, the verb meaning "to undergo changes to shift shape".

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to change naturally come to be thought of as *obake*. For example, the fox (*kitsune*) is both an animal in nature and a *bakemono*, or "transforming thing". Once very common throughout Japan, foxes were nevertheless seldom seen since they moved at night; dead birds, broken fences and chicken's blood were the only evidence of their nocturnal passages. It may have been the difficulty of seeing a fox, or of keeping it in view for any period of time, which led to the notion that they undergo actual physical shift. A fox might skulk into the farmyards looking like a fox, but exit in an entirely different form – as an old woman, a boy, a demon, or a princess. In Japanese lore, they live a sort of mirror image of human society, with fox lords and ladies, servants and labourers, standing on hind legs, dressed in human clothes, and carrying out their mystic rituals by lantern light in the middle of the forest[13].

Other supernatural abilities commonly attributed to the *kitsune*[14] include possession, mouths or tails that generate fire or lightning (known as *kitsune-bi*; literally, fox-fire), wilful manifestation in the dreams of others, flight, invisibility, and the creation of illusions[15] so elaborate as to be almost indistinguishable from reality[16]. Some tales speak of *kitsune* with even greater powers, able to bend time and space, drive people mad, or take fantastic shapes such as a tree of incredible height or a second moon in the sky[17]. Other *kitsune* have characteristics reminiscent of vampires or *succubi* and feed on the life or spirit of human beings, generally through sexual contact[18].

One Asian theologist ponders the relation of will-o'-the-wisp to that of the foxfire produced by *kitsune*, an interesting way of combining mythology of the West with that of the East[19]. Depictions of *kitsune* or their possessed victims may feature round or onion-shaped white balls known as *hoshi no tama* (star balls). It is said those who obtain it can force the *kitsune* to help them; one theory says that the *kitsune* "reserves" some of its magic in this ball when it shape shifts[20].

When not in human form or possessing a human, a *kitsune* keeps the ball in its mouth or carries it on its tail[21]. Some stories identify them as magical jewels or

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[13] Tim Screech, *Japanese Ghosts*, Mangajin, No. 40, http://www.mangajin.com/mangajin/samplemj/ghosts/ghosts.htm

[14] There are two major types of *kitsune*: the *myobu*, or celestial fox – those associated with Inari, who are presented as benevolent - and the *nogitsune*, or wild fox (literally "field fox"), who are often, though not always, presented as malicious. - cf. Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, New York, Cossimo Classics, 2005, p. 154.

[15] The emphasis on visual illusions occurs because vision often dominates the other senses.

[16] Kiyoshi Nozaki, *Kitsune: Japan's fox of mystery, romance and humor*, Tōkyō, Hokuseido Press, 1961, pp. 25–26.

[17] Lafcadio Hearn, *op. cit.*, pp. 156–157; Kiyoshi Nozaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–37.

[18] Kiyoshi Nozaki, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[19] Jamie Hall, *Half Human, Half Animal: Tales of Werewolves and Related Creatures*, Indiana, Bloomington, 2003, p. 142.

[20] Kiyoshi Nozaki, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

[21] Frank Hamel, *Human Animals: Werewolves & Other Transformations*, New York, New Hyde Park, 1969, p. 91.

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pearls[22]. Jewels are also a common symbol of Inari[23], and representations of sacred Inari foxes without them are rare[24].

One belief is that when a *kitsune* changes shape, its *hoshi no tama* holds a portion of its magical power. Another tradition is that the pearl represents the *kitsune*'s soul; the *kitsune* will die if separated from it for long. Those who obtain the ball may be able to extract a promise from the *kitsune* to help them in exchange for its return[25]. For example, a 12th-century tale describes a man using a fox's *hoshi no tama* to secure a favour[26]: "Confound you!" snapped the fox. "Give me back my ball!" The man ignored its pleas till finally it said tearfully, "All right, you've got the ball, but you don't know how to keep it. It won't be any good to you. For me, it's a terrible loss. I tell you, if you don't give it back, I'll be your enemy forever. If you *do* give it back though, I'll stick to you like a protector god". The fox later saves his life by leading him past a band of armed bandits[27].

In the *Issho-wa,* published in 1811, a story is told of foxes observed chasing one another in the yard of an Inari shrine, breathing fire from their mouths. Earlier traditions tell of *kitsune* stroking their tails to produce flame. In several other stories, *kitsune* possess and play with white stones, perhaps the size of an egg, that give off light in the darkness. In other stories, instead of white stones, the *kitsune* use horse or cow bones as torches[28].

The genre of "fox-wedding" stories is sometimes connected to a form of fox fire, although they would seem to also employ other illusion and bewitching. In these tales, people observe, or are made part of an elaborate wedding processionals in the darkness, which at morning light are revealed to be vulpine pranks. The wedding processionals usually involve torches or lanterns created with *kitsune-bi*. One night, an old man from Furuya (Musashi Province[29]), was going back home after having caught a lot of fish, but he saw some flickering red lights and he

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[22] Kiyoshi Nozaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 169–170.

[23] *Kitsune* are often associated with the deity of rice known as Inari. Originally *kitsune* were the messengers of Inari, but now the line between the two has become blurred to the point that Inari is sometimes depicted as a fox. *Kitsune* are connected to both the *shinto* and Buddhist faiths – cf. Tada Katsumi, *Gensō Sekai no Jūnin-tachi IV Nihon-hen*, Tōkyō, Shinkigen-sha, 1990, p. 233; Murakami Kenji, *Yōkai Jiten*, Tōkyō, Mainichi Shinbusha, 2000, p. 133; Mizuki Shigeru, *Yōkika 1, Kantō, Hokkaidō, Okinawa-hen*, Tōkyō, Softgarage, 2004, p. 100; Kusano Taku, *Gensō Dōbutsu Jiten*, Tōkyō, Shinkigen-sha, 1997, p. 102.

[24] Karen Ann Smyers, *The Fox and the Jewel: Shared and Private Meanings in Contemporary Japanese Inari Worship*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1999, pp. 112-114.

[25] Jamie Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

[26] *Kitsune* must keep their promises or suffer deterioration in their rank and power – cf. Kiyoshi Nozaki, *op. cit.*, p. 183).

[27] Royall Tyler, (ed. and trans.), *Japanese Tales*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1987, pp. 299–300.

[28] Janet Goff, *Foxes in Japanese culture: beautiful or beastly?*, in "Japan Quarterly", Vol. 44 No. 2, April-June 1997, pp. 67–77.

[29] One of the 15 provinces of the Tōkaidō - cf. E. Papinot, *Historical and Geographical Dictionary of Japan*, Tōkyō, Charles E. Tuttle, 1992, p. 414.

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realized that he encountered a *kitsune no yome-iri* (a fox wedding). Suddenly the lights went out and when the open-mouthed old man came to his senses, he found no fish in his fishing net. Then he realized that everything had been planned by foxes and returned home empty handed[30]. At other times the beckoning flame will promptly extinguish at the approach of the victim, leaving him in complete darkness, far away from the road. Or it may suddenly "fly away" and disappear in the sea". The breath-exhaled fire may even "shoot forward to the distance of some two or three feet"[31].

We can find another account in the legend *Kitsune-bi* (Chiryū town, Aichi Prefecture). In the mountains north of Chiryū, some orb like lights could be seen. They were called *kitsune no yome-iri*[32]. The lights seemed to guide on the travellers for a few kilometres. When people left on the ground some *Inari-zushi*[33] or any other souvenir brought from the local festival and bowed, the lights went out and the traveller reached Chiryū safely[34].

Sometimes, the foxes are able to feel the human pain and turn up to light the path of a new born. Minamoto no Yoritomo[35]'s mistress got pregnant and was banished from Kamakura Court by Yoritomo's wife, while her husband was away. The distressed mistress got to Kamibe at dusk but the villagers would not let her in, so the woman found a shabby hut in the mountains and went into labour. Although the night was very dark, she finally gave birth to a child at the light of *kitsune-bi*. Next morning some people found her and her baby. They inferred from her clothes that she was a lady in wait in the Kamakura Court and sent a messenger to Minamoto no Yoritomo. Afterwards, the mountain was named after her, Tangō, and the child, Shimazu Saburō, became *daimyō*[36] in Kyūshū[37].

For one thing, a spook-fox will always emit a certain luminosity, and even on the darkest night his human shape will stand out so clearly that the colour of the hair and the pattern of the *kimono* is plainly discernible at the distance of some six feet. Hair and pattern show up as if a fire were glowing beneath them. Usually, also, the face of the human apparition is unnaturally long[38]. In Higashi village,

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[30] Ikehara Shōji, *Nihon no minwa 300*, Tōkyō, Mokuba Shoten, 1994, p. 202.

[31] U. A. Casal, *The Goblin Fox and Badger and Other Witch Animals of Japan*, in "Folklore Studies", Vol. 18, 1959, p. 10.

[32] Rain falling from a clear sky – a sun shower – is sometimes called *kitsune no yomeiri*.

[33] *Sushi* (raw fish) in fried *tofu*.

[34] Okabe Yoshifumi, Kashige Noriaki, Gotō Yasuhiro, *Nihon densetsu taikei*, vol. 7 (Nagano, Shizuoka, Aichi, Gifu), Tōkyō, Mizuumi Shobō, 1980, p. 59.

[35] Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147–1199) was the first *shōgun* in the Minamoto clan and an eminent administrator; his organization of the Kamakura Bakufu (Kamamura Government) proved that he had real genius for government – cf. E. Papinot, *op. cit.*, pp. 381–383).

[36] Feudal lord.

[37] Ōshima Yoshitaka, Okabe Yoshifumi, Tsuneaki Tōru, Hirano Kaoru, Miyata Nori, *Nihon densetsu taikei*, vol. 5 (Chiba, Saitama, Tōkyō, Kanagawa, Yamanashi), Tōkyō, Mizuumi Shobō, 1987, p. 91.

[38] U. A. Casal, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

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(Jōshū Province), some foxes used to show up evening by evening. One night, a drunkard fond of gambling was on his way home when a light appeared in front of him. Soon after that, he caught a glimpse of several men engaged in gambling. The drunkard heartily joined them. Even though he had lost all his money, he would not give up gambling, so he took off his kimono as a forfeit. At that very moment, he felt a tap on his shoulder. When he came to, he realized that he had been deceived by foxes and he was now lying naked in the middle of the road[39].

Indeed, foxes are very fond of luring people to unholy places by creating a welcoming *kitsune-bi*. The fire is produced by the fox striking the ground with his tail, or it may also be his luminous breath. It will either burn quietly, like a lamp, to attract the intended victim into a phantom house, or it will wander about like a torch and confuse the late traveller, sometimes ensnaring him into an inextricable forest or a swampy moor[40]. Noticing the sun going westward, a hunter was about to go back home. While he was going down the mountain slope, the sky turned black, the stars emerged and he found himself going in circles. He stopped by a tree, waiting for the moon to light up his way, but he fell asleep. When he woke up, he saw the place lighted up but not because of the moon, but because of a red ball of light, as big as a fist, flying towards him. He reached for his bow and shot at it. The light split and grew weary. When he drew near, he saw a black and white fox with an arrow in his mouth, trying to say something to him. Realizing that he had killed the god of the mountain, he threw his bow asking for pardon, but the fox had already disappeared. Then the hunter reached the top of the Mount Fushiushi and came across a cave. On the eastern wall he found his arrow at the foot of a statue of Inari. Eventually, the hunter got to his village guided by the moonlight. He gave up hunting and became a monk as he felt remorse for his bad deed. Afterwards he built the Fushiushiun temple at the foot of the mountain where the fox was killed and he placed the statue of Yakushi Nyōrai in there. In the night the 92 year-old monk died, he saw the *kitsune-bi* dancing in front of him and apparently blazing the whole mountain[41].

The lore of the badger is far more restricted than that of the fox, and in Japan seems to have become general only in about the 14th century, being then supported by tales introduced from China[42].

Badgers (*tanuki*) too "emit fire", and *tanuki-bi* is another word for will-o'-the-wisps. In the Osaka district mainly, there is a belief that *tanuki-bi* wander around on rainy nights. The unwary rustic mistakes the *tanuki-bi* for the glowing pipe of a fellow-farmer; he will not only hold conversation with the disguised *tanuki*, but may even light his own pipe at the ghost-fire. Since the use of tobacco among the lower classes goes back hardly to the beginning of the 17th century, this

[39] Ikehara Shōji, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-191.
[40] U. A. Casal, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[41] Okabe Yoshifumi, Kashige Noriaki, Gotō Yasuhiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.
[42] U. A. Casal, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

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shows that the belief in *tanuki* was strong enough to create new variants as opportunity arose, up to comparatively recent times[43]. He can equally well "create" thunder and lightning and earthquakes, to scare people out of their wits[44].

Another prominent demon in Japanese folklore is the *tengu*[45], a mythological being living in mountain forests. According to lore, anyone entering the territory of the *tengu* unwittingly can fall into strange and unpleasant situations. The *tengu* can, in a flash, transform themselves into ugly little men, women and children; then they maliciously tease people with all sorts of nasty tricks. As quickly as they appear, just as quickly they vanish. Some ancient beliefs depicted the *tengu* as creatures of war and conflict. Sometimes their actions in legends are hypocritical. Until the 14th century, evil legends were told about the *tengu*; but gradually they evolved into both good and bad beings. Many tales were told of the *tengu* overcoming evil. In the Buddhist belief they became guides for monks in understanding the Dharma tenets and sacred rites, and also protected Buddhist shrines. In the 18th and 19th centuries they were revered as mountain deities and the woodcutters and huntsmen offered tributes to the *tengu* deities in order to receive success in their work[46].

The belief in the *tengu* continued until the beginning of the 20th century. Today ceremonial festivals are held in their honour. Tales are still being told of them in modern Japan. In some areas, woodsmen still offer rice cakes to the *tengu* before starting their work[47]. From time to time, in a pine tree called "the dragon lantern" appeared some lights. The sailors used to pray before those lights for a safe sail. Some people say that in that very tree Otohime[48] hung some lights while Urashima Tarō was visiting his parents' tomb. After a while, the pine withered and people hired a woodcutter to cut it down, but, as soon as he touched the pine tree, he ran high fever. In the same evening, the owner of the land on which the pine was growing had a dream. In that dream a *tengu* appeared and told him that the pine tree was his dwelling place and he was to go on a trip to the Dragon Palace to visit Otohime and tell her what had happened. Then the *tengu* begged the man not to cut down the tree and to wait for a couple of days. Still, the man put under the

[43] *Ibidem*, p. 51.

[44] *Ibidem*, p. 52; Murakami Kenji, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

[45] *Tengu* (the mountain demon) is a powerful mountain goblin, originally portrayed with a long beak and wings but gradually becoming more human-like, with a long nose instead of a beak. Artistic depictions of the *tengu* range from stumpy, bearded creatures to beings with great lumpy noses. *Tengu* can assume various forms and can be kind protectors or cruel tricksters, carrying off small children, starting fires, and even inciting wars.

[46] Okabe Yoshifumi, Kashige Noriaki, Gotō Yasuhiro, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[47] http://www.asianart.com/articles/rubin/

[48] In the tale of *Urashima Tarō*, Dragon Princess of the Sea; her name means "luminous jewel" and she is incredibly beautiful - except when she is in her dragon form (see Yei Theodora Ozaki, *The Japanese Fairy Book*, Tōkyō, Charles E. Tuttle, pp. 26-43).

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tree a Buddhist sutra and a pardon letter to Otohime and cut down the tree, getting rid of the *tengu* who was living there[49].

A legend from Aichi Prefecture offers a description of *tengu no hi* (the fire of *tengu*). In the mountains near Shitara town, in rainy evenings one could see a fire that split in hundreds of small lights gradually disappearing only to merge again in a single flame. Such flames are called *tengu no hi*, but they ceased to appear at the beginning of the Meiji period[50].

The physical world is an imposture of the darkness that trying to steal away the light, but it can only hold its reflections in the matter[51]. Satisfied with the fish caught in Ushibuchi – the pond in which a *tengu* lived –, a boatman was rowing back home, when the surface of the water suddenly lighted. Looking up, he saw some balls of light burning on the top of the pine trees growing on the shore. When he pulled himself together, he saw that all the fish in his fishing net had vanished. Then he realized that he had been befooled by the *tengu* and the lights he had seen on the shore were *tengu-bi*. Some say that the things would have been different if he had offered his first fish caught as a gift to the *tengu*[52].

Another version accounts that in the branches of the pines or of the cedars linger flames which burn with a strange noise. It is said that the *tengus* fly up in the sky along with those flames. If one stares at the flames long enough, (s)he might be kidnapped by the *tengus*. One winter, during Meiji era when there was still no electricity, a young man heading for Chiryū temple noticed that the sky turned red and some terrifying flames came out of the branches of a huge cedar. The young man managed somehow to find the way to the temple and took shelter there, trembling and shivering till morning[53].

The fires of *tengu* make up an ultimate exhibit of the nocturnal imagination, as emphasized in a version from Shirano town (Aichi Prefecture). One summer night, while people were celebrating *hi-machi*[54], a light resembling a lantern came out the Mount Ganpō. The light went high in the air, up to the mountain peak and split into two lights: in the beginning one went eastward and one westward and soon they came back to the mountain peak and combined again in a single flame. Becoming aware that the light was *tengu-bi*, the people started to pray and covered their heads with *fundoshi*[55] and straw sandals so that the *tengu*, disgusted at that

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[49] Ōshima Yoshitaka, Okabe Yoshifumi, Tsuneaki Tōru, Hirano Kaoru, Miyata Nori, *op. cit.*, pp. 329–330.

[50] Okabe Yoshifumi, Kashige Noriaki, Gotō Yasuhiro, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[51] Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrand, *Dicţionar de simboluri*, vol. 2, Bucureşti, Artemis, 1995, pp. 240–241.

[52] Okabe Yoshifumi, Kashige Noriaki, Gotō Yasuhiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141.

[53] *Ibidem*, pp. 144–145.

[54] Waiting for the sun on the 15th night of the first, fifth and ninth month of the old calendar; meeting in each other's homes, believers would pass the night talking until the act of devotion could be performed as the sun rose. - cf. Stuart D. B. Picken, *Essentials of Shinto: An Analytical Guide to Principal Teachings*, Westport, Greenwood Press, 1994, p. 351.

[55] Loincloth.

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sight, might not come near them[56]. The *tengu* usually appeared when people celebrated *kami-mukae*[57] the night of *hana-matsuri*[58] (flower festival) [59]. There is another version from Aichi of the same legend: an old man called Toyosaburō scraped his living from fishing in summer and hunting in winter. The man believed that he could fish more eels in the nights when the *tengu-bi* emerged because at the time the fish went downstream. Those who saw the *tengu-bi* either managed to run away or tremble with fear, but the old man was very brave. The *tengu-bi* are big fires, so bright that at their light one could easily make out the branches and the leaves of the tree in which they are burning. Besides these *tengu-bi*, there were also *hitoboshi* that the people used to light up their way. One could not fully see such a light, but he could only take a glimpse of it. *Hitoboshi* are known all over Japan and they are very much alike *kitsune-bi*[60].

Artists depict the *oni*[61] with horns and wearing tiger skins. They have no neck, but a crest of hair and a big mouth; their fingers are clawed, and their arms elevated to the shoulders. These artistic renditions of demons not only represent the supernatural, but also embodiments of the evil facets of human nature. The earth *oni*, according to Buddhist belief, are responsible for disease and epidemics (they are dressed in red). The *oni* of hell (red or green bodies) hunt for sinners and taking them by chariot to Emma-Ō, the god of hell. There are invisible demons among the *oni* whose presence can be detected because they sing or whistle. The female *oni* are those transformed into demons after death by jealousy or violent grief. The Buddhist *oni* demons did not always represent the forces of evil. In Buddhist lore there are tales of monks who after death became *oni* in order to protect temples from potential disasters. The belief in the *oni*, reached its zenith in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Another form of the illusory light is *oni-bi* (demon fire), floating balls of fire of supernatural origin that herald demonic or ghostly activity. In the war between the Genji and Heike clans, one of the Heike ladies in wait, being pregnant, escaped from the battle and took refugee in the mountains. Unfortunately, neither she nor the twins to whom she gave birth survived. The people buried their corpses under a

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[56] The emergence of *tengu-bi* is an indication of an imminent illness and people try hard not to see such fires - cf. Murakami Kenji, *op. cit.*, pp. 233–234; Mizuki Shigeru, *Yōkika 2, Chūbu-hen*, Tōkyō, Softgarage, 2004, p. 101; Tada Katsumi, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14).

[57] Ancient Japanese animism revered nature. The *kami-mukae* (deity welcoming) festival relied on tall tree trunks to serve as guideposts or antennae for the gods, with flower displays perched on top to attract them.

[58] Buddha's birthday.

[59] Okabe Yoshifumi, Kashige Noriaki, Gotō Yasuhiro, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[60] *Ibidem*, p. 145.

[61] *Oni* are described as follows: height of one *jō* (approximately three meters), eyes glaring, flame burning from the giant mouth, fangs, sharp and long nails on fingers and toes. Hair bristled up. Body black and blue and green as such, wears no garment but a red loincloth. Some horned, some one-eyed, some many-handed, some one-legged etc. – cf. Atsushi Mashimo, *Oni in Japanese Culture*, in „Anuarul Institutului de Etnografie şi Folclor", tome 17, 2006, p. 141.

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mound, but after a while, strange lights called *oni-bi* appeared on the top of those mounds and people suddenly became ill. When the monk Nichiren[62] and two of his disciples came up in that region, they prayed for the eternal rest of the souls. Soon after that, the fires ceased and finally people felt relived. The mound with the three bodies is now part of Ekō-san Jōrin temple and pregnant women go there to pray for a safe delivery[63].

There are many stories about such fire-balls, all over Japan, but usually they are believed to be in the nature of religious offerings of the Dragon, whence mainly known as *ryō-tō* (dragon-lanterns), or *ten-tō* (heavenly lamps), but also as *burari-hi*, dangling fires (because usually they first fly into a venerated pine-tree), or more sincerely as *shiranu-hi* (unknowable fires). An old man with his dog, was walking along the beach when he heard a sudden loud noise in the sea. A fire-ball about two feet in diameter had jumped up a couple of yards; after a while it split into seven or eight parts, and extinguished. But at the same time in a hut near the beach a fire (light) began to glow[64]. There are also tales of such fire-balls coming out of ancient stone-markers of "monuments"[65] as in the legend *The Fire stone of Taira Masakado* (Ibaraki Prefecture). One day, Masakado's funeral stone in Nishifuku temple was taken away by an unknown warrior and some strange flames came out of the stone. It is said that Taira no Masakado's spirit is still dwelling inside it[66].

Sometimes only pure people can see the lights revolving round a temple. On the 31st of December, in the evening, three lights appear at the temple dedicated to Gongen[67] (Nishi no Shima town, Shimane Prefecture). One of the lights goes into a temple stone and the stone burns brightly. The three lights appear from different directions and people watch them from the open sea[68].

Additional similar phenomena are described in Japanese folklore, including *hitodama* (literally *"human ball"* as in ball of energy), *hi no tama* (ball of flame), *aburagae*, *koemonbi*, *ushionibi*, etc. All these phenomena are described as balls of flame or light, at times associated with graveyards, but occurring across Japan as a whole in a wide variety of situations and locations[69].

The spot where a sacrifice took place is marked by some blue balls of light. In order to stop the flood that destroyed the dam in Nagasaki, the people buried a

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[62] Nichiren (1222–1282) was the founder of the Nichiren Buddhist sect.

[63] Ōshima Yoshitaka, Okabe Yoshifumi, Tsuneaki Tōru, Hirano Kaoru, Miyata Nori, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

[64] U. A. Casal, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[65] *Ibidem.*

[66] Isa Yasuo, Imase Fumiya, Oshima Toshio, Tokuda Kazuo, *Nihon densetsu taikei*, vol. 4, (Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma), Tōkyō, Mizuumi Shobō, 1987, p. 82.

[67] Avatar, or *shinto kami* (shinto god) as a manifestation of a Buddhist deity. – cf. Octavian Simu, *Mitologia japoneză. Un dicționar*, București, Saeculum I.O., 2005, p. 81.

[68] Sakai Naomi, Sakada Tomohiro, Totsuka Hiromi, Nomura Jun'ichi, *Nihon densetsu taikei*, vol. 11, (Tottori, Shimane), Tōkyō, Mizuumi Shobō, 1985, p. 326.

[69] Mizuki, Shigeru, *Graphic World of Japanese Phantoms*, Kodansha, Tōkyō, 1985.

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18 year-old maiden at its foot. Ever since, her spirit has been appearing there in the form of a blue ball of light[70].

The ghost is the adulterated form of the unearthly light. A man named Gensuke was put in a chest and buried so that the bridge on the river should not fall into pieces. In the moonless nights some devilish red balls of light appear on that very spot[71]. The legend *Nanny's pond* (Kyōto region) emphasizes the greed that forever binds the soul to this world. An old woman was hired to look after a baby, but she took the money and pushed the baby into a river. In the end she was caught and punished accordingly, but her soul turned into a ball o light wandering on the bank of a pond. Ever since the pond was called Nanny's pond[72].

As a brief overview of Japanese lore connected to will-o'-the-wisp, we can identify several types of *oni-bi*:

- *okuri-bi* (Aichi Prefecure): the fires that walk along with the traveller, lighting his way;
- *asobi-bi* (Kōchi Prefecture): the fires that appear above the sea; they recede if one approaches or draw near if one walks away; sometimes the balls of fire combine into a single flame or the flame splits into several balls of light;
- *igebo/gottai-bi* (Mie Prefecture);
- *inka*: the demon fires that emerge along with the dead spirits or with the *yōkai;*
- *kazedama* (Gifu Prefecure): during storms the houses catch fire because of *kazedama*; in the 30th year of the Meiji Era, during a typhoon, some balls of light appeared from the mountain side and floated in the air;
- *sara-kazoe*[73]: some references are found in Toriyama Sekien's *Konjaku Gazu Zoku Hyakki* in which Okiku's spirit turns into a fire ball emerging from a water well; the spirit starts counting plates;
- *sōgen-bi*: some references are found in Toriyama Sekien's *Gazu Hyakki Yakkō* in which a monk stole something from Mibu-dera and, as a divine punishment, was transformed in *oni-bi*; his head can be seen floating above the flames,
- *chōchin-bi* (Tokuyama Prefecture): such fires appear on the rice paddies and float in the air, about one meter above the ground and then disappear if approached by people; it is also said that *bakemono* such as foxes and badgers walk holding lanterns in their hands;

[70] Araki Hiroyuki, Arishima Eiko, Dōmitsu Sachiko, *Nihon densetsu taikei*, vol. 14 (Kumamoto, Miyazaki, Kagoshima), Tōkyō, Mizuumi Shobō, 1984, p. 241.

[71] Sakai Naomi, Sakada Tomohiro, Totsuka Hiromi, Nomura Jun'ichi, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–171.

[72] Ōchi Yuriki, Sakawa Noboyuki, Tanaka Haruo, *Nihon densetsu taikei*, vol. 8 (Shiga, Kyōto, Hyōgo), Tōkyō, Mizuumi Shobō, 1989, p. 315.

[73] Counting the plates.

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– *hidama* (Okinawa Prefecture): such balls of fire are found in the kitchen or in the charcoal extinguishers, sometimes taking the shape of birds that set everything on fire as they fly;
– *watari bishaku* (Kyōto region): balls of fire lingering in the air; because they are long and narrow, with a long tail, they resemble a *bishaku*[74];
– *kitsune-bi*[75].

Most of Japanese legends show a particular interest in the illusory characteristic of light. The philosophical foundations of Buddhism proclaim that all worldly phenomena is unsatisfactory, transient and impermanent; there is nothing one can call one's own; the world is an illusion and our suffering is caused by our clinging to the world of illusion (the world of desire).

A significant number of *obake* or of *yūrei* stories are explicitly related to fire. In many societies, fire is seen as the chief helper of working people, but also as their deadliest menace, and so fire is often an indication of strange forces in the offing. A face suddenly appears and then disappears in the flames of a bonfire, a *hi no tama* lingers too long above harvested paddies, the *kitsune-bi* is both seen and not seen behind hedges and thickets. But not only the supernatural creatures, such as *tengu* or *oni* are related to fire, but also animals such as the fox and the badger. That fox and badger, as well as most animals which live in holes in the ground, should in some manner all have transcendental powers, is due to the fact that in the stillness of the night they hear what goes on in the bowels of the earth.

In all Japanese tales mentioned above, the illusory fire stands for: *the souls of either the dead* (fire-balls marking the places where people had been buried such as the tombs of the Heike clan; the grave in which the body of the maiden sacrificed to build a bridge lies; the tomb of the child murdered by his nurse) *or of the living* (the fire-ball representing the spirit of a captured fox that promises to help a man in his actions only to get back its *hoshi no tama*; the spirit of a black and white fox – actually the mountain god – shot by a hunter); *life force, vitality* (foxes breathing fire); *guidance*[76] (fire-balls show the way to the belated travellers; the flame illuminating Minamoto no Yoritomo's mistress while giving birth); *brightness as beauty*, therefore emphasizing the aesthetic element (lamps and lanterns used at the foxes' wedding processionals); *light as playful, tricky or mischievous*, hence, highlighting the game-like component (foxes playing with white stones that gave off light or with cow bones used as torches, balls of light distracting the traveller in

[74] Ladle, dipper, scoop.

[75] Kusano Taku, *op. cit.*, p. 69, 186, 197; Tada Katsumi, *op. cit.*, pp. 231–234; Mizuki Shigeru, *Mizuki Shigeru no Yōkai Jiten*, Tōkyō, Tōkyō-dō Shuppan, 1981, p. 188; Mizuki Shigeru, *Yōkika 4, Chūgoku, Shikoku-hen*, Tōkyō, Softgarage, 2004, p. 106; Mizuki Shigeru, *Yōkika 1, Kantō, Hokkaidō, Okinawa-hen*, p. 57; Murakami Kenji, *op. cit.*, p. 15, 86, 105, 204, 367–368; Mirakami Kenji, *Nihon Yōkai Daijiten*, Tōkyō, Kadogawa Shoten, 2005, p. 156; Kanda Sakyō, *Fuchi-bi, Hitodama, Kitsune-bi*, Tōkyō, Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 1992, pp. 37–67.

[76] Guidance is but a minor expression since there are few such stories underling this aspect of *kitsune-bi*, *oni-bi*, *tengu-bi*.

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order to steal the fish out of his net or to make a drunkard stop by and start gambling). In some instances, the aesthetic element mixes with the game-like component: the splitting balls of lights linger in the air for apparently no reason; they only attract the beholders' eye, with no further consequences.

In most of the cases, fire is a *marker,* making things stand out clearly: it marks a treasure, a grave, the way out of the woods, a rite of passage (a wedding).

Fire performs under the laws of (visual) *attraction* (if someone stares too long at a *tengu-bi* (s)he could be kidnapped by a *tengu*). The eye is attracted to the fire-balls signalling a foxes' wedding, a tomb, a way out. Sometimes, the attraction is actually a distraction[77]: the old man from Furuya looks open-mouthed at some lights, only to realize that all the fish he had caught had been taken away or the drunkard is lured by some lights and cannot help joining a gambling party. Actually, the shift from attraction to distraction[78], from guidance to temptation brings about the illusory feature in the flame. In none of the examples above, the frozen traveller stops by a bonfire to warm himself up, to eat or drink to gain his powers back. Except of the tales of foxes breathing fire and, not explicitly, the tale of the woman giving birth at the light of *kitsune-bi*, there is no indication of fire warmth in any of those folktales[79], hence, one can infer that it is not a real fire, but only an illusory flame.

The game[80] played by those illusory flames readjusts *distance* (appearing/ disappearing lights, close/distant fire-balls) and *part-whole perception* (one light/more split lights/one light again). Fire becomes illusory when of the game-like element washes away the absolute value in things, causing people to be befooled or deceived. Illusion also illustrates change, pointing out at a reality which is, by no means, frozen. All one can get is a glimpse. And then, the next second, the perspective has shifted. The view has already changed.

[77] Or a temptation, if we refer to the location of a treasure marked by will-o'-the-wisp.

[78] Luring people to unholy places, such as graves.

[79] Fire-balls marking graves, the spirit of a dead or dying person depicted as a fire-ball, floating lanters to (mis)guide the traveller or to announce a foxes' wedding etc.

[80] See also the ethymology of *ignis fatuus* in footnote 2.

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A WORD OF TRIBUTE

Acad. MARIUS SALA

There is already a well-established tradition in the Romanian Academy: on various anniversaries, a tribute is paied to the personalities of the Romanian scientific and cultural life. Today, the Arts, Architecture and Audio-Visual Department, along with the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, organized a session dedicated to the commemoration of 50 years since the passing away of Constantin Brăiloiu, the great Romanian ethnomusicologist.

C. Brăiloiu's life and work will be evoked by the personalities listed in the session's program. I am only trying to make a short summary, as I know about him from my master, the academician Alexandru Rosetti, a great admirer of C. Brăiloiu.

They both belonged to the same generation: C. Brăiloiu was born in 1893, and Alexandru Rosetti in 1895, and I think that they both had noble origins, a very important aspect for Rosetti. Often times, in informal conversations, the great promoter of Romanian culture and science projects stated that Brăiloiu was an excellent organiser. His projects fascinated Rosetti, especially the folklore archive that included 2817 cylinders and 851 disks. I am almost certain that Al. Rosetti initiated his famous collection of dialect texts recorded on cylinders under C. Brăiloiu's influence. Few persons fascinated my master in such an obvious way. I remember he also used to imitate Brăiloiu. Out of those imitations I came to realise that Brăiloiu was remarkably intelligent, that he was a *grand aristocrat de l'esprit* and that he had a very expressive look, confirmed by the classical photo that Mrs. Dorina Rusu printed in the *Dictionary of Romanian Academy Members (1866-1999)*. Several times he repeated C. Brăiloiu's answer when he met Gh. Abălaşei, the technician famous for the ingenuity and passion he put in creating various machines, who Al. Rosetti later brought to the Institute of Phonetics and Dialectology he managed. Al. Rosetti, astutely observing the others at the moment of Gheorghiţă's departure, remarked his keen look: "Mr. Brăiloiu, it seems that our man has a bee in his bonnet". Brăiloiu's answer was prompt. "Mr. Rosetti, he has an entire swarm, not just one!". It is remarkable that Al. Rosetti talked openly about Brăiloiu during a period when his name was out of favor. It is known that Brăiloiu, after being technical councelor of the Romanian Legation in Berne for 2 years (1943–1945), was a lecturer and, from 1958 until his

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death, a reader with the National Council of Scientific Research in Ethnomusicology and the Institute of Musicology of the University of Paris.

Rosetti's admiration was based on certain facts: C. Brăiloiu initiated, together with his friend Béla Bártok, a new ethnomusicological methodology, he founded and managed the International Archive of World Music in Geneva (1944–1958) and created the Folklore Archive of the Society of Romanian Composers (1928–1943). Our great ethnomusicologist also wrote countless folklore studies. We should not forget that, at the start of his activity, Al. Rosetti also published this kind of folklore studies (the paper concerning the language of magical incantations and the Romanian carols are some of them). Maybe Al. Rosetti was very much influenced by the fact that the man we celebrate today was a precursor of structuralism in music, as he was in the field of linguistics. Therefore, another reason to praise Brăiloiu.

Let me conclude with a confession: I first heard about C. Brăiloiu in my grandfather's house, the folklorist Vasile Sala, whom Béla Bártok, C. Brăiloiu's friend, paid a visit. When I became a student in Bucharest, I found out I could not meet Brăiloiu, as he was not in the country anymore. I was glad when I later learned that his works were published in 6 volumes of *Works*, edited by Mrs. Emilia Comişel. Has he still been among us, he would have been glad for the tribute brought to him by his country: his works were published, and the institution he worked for bears his name. Therefore, the permanence of Constantin Brăiloiu's work is secured.

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CONSTANTIN BRĂILOIU, TUTOR OF THE MUSICAL LIFE

OCTAVIAN LAZĂR COSMA

On December 20, 1958, when his life flame fades away in Geneva, Constantin Brăiloiu was 67 years old, and he was born in Bucharest, on August the 13th, 1893. The one who euphemistically called himself „an employee with the musical vice brigade", lived a febrile, frantic, dense life, unspared by immense satisfactions as well as deceptions and dramatic moments, a life of service to the task of emancipation of the art of sounds, especially of the Romanian one. Despite all these, Constantin Brăiloiu proved himself to be one of the pioneers in the domains of building up a transnational body, having as purpose the study of the oral, artistic heritage of peoples, for a better understanding, starting with the premise that there are as many junction elements as differentiating ones. In other words, the Romanian academic intuitively had – and he also proved it by his artistic activity, as a theorist of folklore – the bases of the future globalization.

For thirteen years Constantin Brăiloiu was to be found in the benches of Conservatories and institutions for musical trainings in Bucharest, Vienna, Lausanne, and Paris, making himself noticed for his brilliant intelligence and the sagacity of his inquiring mind, in constant run for truths, norms, systems, and generalizations. A relatively short period followed, in which, while in Swisserland, he activated as composer and especially as musical critic, setting his options and intriguing his fellows by his original value judgments. Like in a symmetrical arch, the last period of his life was again linked to the Country of the Cantons, where, for fifteen years, he pleaded and worked hard for the universal structure of the International Archives for Folk Music, which he tailored and coordinated.

Though, Constantin Brăiloiu devoted most of his years, as the most fruitful years as well, to the musical life in Romania, which he wanted to see dynamic and vast. Those were tumultuous years, in which he affirmed his protheic personality, validating his talent, mastership, erudition, intellectual and managerial capacities – the last feature having a not-yet known concept, but well mastered by the genius that he proved to be in issues pertaining to musical management and administration.

Constantin Brăiloiu did not flirt with acquiring positions in musical institutions, opera houses and philharmonics, although these would benefit from

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the advantages of his inventive, charismatic personality. He scrutinized other arias, of ignored territories, granting them sense and coherence. First of all, it is to be noticed that he manifested his professionalism in five musical domains that were more or less already consecrated: composition, musical criticism, folkloristics, musical pedagogy, with notable contributions to all of them. Besides these, his spirit was implemented in managerial activities, as he was the founder of the Societatea Compozitorilor Români (Romanian Composers' Society), that had George Enescu as president, and Brăiloiu as uncontested and unrivaled Secretary General.

In April 1928 he set the fundaments for the Arhiva de Folklore a Societății Compozitorilor (Folklore Archive of the Composers' Society), which then will go under the government protection. Within this institution he conceived and launched field collections and expeditions, mechanic recordings, with the use of machines that were just created, after he collected on phonogrammic wax cylinders. He transcribed and printed collections and essays, he lectured in international forums, promoting the richness and unknown of the material discovered especially in peasant settings. In this sense, he met with Béla Bartók's activities and ideas, whom he also admired exemplary.

Composer Constantin Brăiloiu is a peer in the generation that was marked by George Enescu. His debut was in 1907 with an instrumental piece for ensemble, and his last musical work was a cycle of arranged folk songs. The genres he cultivated were chamber music, song, choral miniature – in a neoclassic style, at the beginning, later on taking inspiration out of the folk music, which he worshipped, sensing its infinite resources. Brăiloiu did not compos for orchestra, was not seduced by modern sonorities, although he was in touch with the new tendencies, and had friends among the promoters of avantgarde music.

He excelled in the sphere of musical criticism, cooperating with prestigious Swiss periodicals since his youth, and then continuing it by publishing in Romania, intermittently, in publications of French and Romanian languages. His verb was inciting, caustic, charged with juicy aphoristic formulae, touching also to the managerial aspects of the concert life. He did not avoid the sensitive subjects, exposing opinions as brave as original, with reference to the high art of sounds. A nonconformist spirit, he underlined with precision the sensitive aspects, harshly expressed criticism and needs, understanding his role of an educator and opinion leader. He loved the real music and was enthusiastic about poetical performances. He seemed to nourish an affinity with the creation of modern decennia, identifying in Claude Debussy the "flag bearer of the French music". By his symphonic poems, Richard Strauss "turned the music into a slave of literature – when the sound walks supported by the clutches of anecdote". Piotr Ilici Ceaikovski, toward whom he shows a sincere admiration, "shakes melodies out of his sleeves". Frederic Chopin was "a scubadiver in the seas of sonorities". Alexander Glazuov "remains a Moscow Mendelssohn", Gustav Mahler represents "the most captivating

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moment of German music after Wagner". To this last one Brăiloiu acknowledges the force of his symphonism imprinted to the theatrical music. How many such samples of ingenious and surprising notes, authentic syntagms, are to be found on the pages of his chronicles... In regard with the purity of his literary style, of his capacity for poetical rhetoric, Constantin Brăiloiu had no equal in Romanian musical journalism. Alas, he did not hold the pen in his hand for a long time. He always felt attracted to virgin horizons...

Naturally, he devoted time to indigenous composition, which he supported by all means. He stated that "the Romanian school could not rise up on the fundaments of wagnerian technique", models should have been looked for in the modern French music. Constantin Brăiloiu understood perfectly the ascendant course of the musical history, from simple to complex. "If it weren't for Glinka and *the five* to exist, neither Skriabin could have written *Prometheus*, nor Stravinski the *Symphony for wind instruments*". Brăiloiu acknowledged the contributions in the Romanian escalating composition, and with a remarkable, prophetic intuition noticed the key moments, when he stated that: "The being of Romanian music generates its body from the [opera] *Baba Hârca* to *Oedipe*". Among the pre-Enescu authors he mentioned not only Alexandru Flechtenmacher but also Gavriil Muzicescu, Gheorghe Dima, Ion Vidu, and Eduard Candella. The last one's overture, *Moldova*, "should be acclaimed standing up... A first ray of our beauty sun that raises up"... It is well-known Brăiloiu's admiration for the choral works of Dumitru Georgescu Kiriac – whose statement was clearly formulated: "It is to us that, alongside the Western creations, Romanian creations to stay in honor"...

George Enescu, "...put himself in the service of the most Romanian cause". His *3rd Sonata for piano and violin "in Romanian folk character"* was received like a masterpiece that sets a superior step for the Romanian composition, piece on which Brăiloiu exclaimed: "Hic incipit vita nova!"

Constantin Brăiloiu was convinced that only resorting to the "fatherland's melody" can serve the "formation of the national style". Music assumes a style, indistinguishable linked to the author that conceives and elaborates. "The man is not an abstraction, but the product of a soil and the reflection of a sky". From this and the next assertion there is no big gap: "A people does not rich perfect maturity until he produces an art in which his vitality is affirmed".

As a folklorist, Constantin Brăiloiu is appreciated in the worldwide specialists' milieu for his academic contributions, collections, volumes, essays, that forwarded a method for study which did not end up its resources. He founded the phonographic archive in Geneva, an authentic research institute, organized field collections, exhibitions, artist presentations (to London also), and launched the action, internationally focused, for the deepening of the knowledge of oral musics. He is the one who demonstrated at large the comparative study of folklore, such as, for example, on the basis of children's songs worldwide, a framework in which the Romanian repertory had a central role. In Romania, Constantin Brăiloiu built up a

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school that survived; among his disciples, Emilia Comişel continued his work and started to publish it, underlining new dimensions to his emblematic personality.

As a professor, Constantin Brăiloiu linked his prestigious name to the Bucharest Conservatory, today the National University of Music, where he taught History of Music and Folklore, in a non-scholastic manner, charming his audience by the verve of his original ideas, trying to inspire not only knowledge but also thinking systems and value judgments. He also professed with the Religious Music Academy, alongside with Ioan D. Petrescu and Paul Constantinescu. As a professor, he was highly esteemed.

As already mentioned, a major field for Brăiloiu's activity was represented by the Society of Romanian Composers, which he founded on November 2, 1920. Out of nothing, gathering specific energies around himself, he built up an institution meant to affirm the professional creation of Romanian marks. He conceived the Constitution of this organization, organized concerts inside and outside the country, supported the youngsters, encouraged the authentic talents, paid attention to the fact that composers should live of the musical scores they produced, by integrating the authorights in the international collecting system. Doubtless, the 23 years he devoted to the Composer's Society were of hard work, achievements and disappointments, as proof standing the polemics he had with Filip Lazăr and George Breazul, in which he demonstrated a robust tenacity, a prominent thinking, and high morality.

His relationships with the pleiade of contemporary musicians were exceptional, as Constantin Brăiloiu was the most dynamic character of the Romanian musical life in the interwar period. Nothing passed on without his contribution; he involved himself in the most difficult problems, did not avoid the force situations, was lucid and objective, perseverant and omniscient. Probably such qualities were at the origin of aversions that followed him during his exiled that he imposed on himself, in order to serve Romanian music from outside, from inside the circles with European visibility. Thus he learned with resignation that was no longer included on the members list of the metamorphosed Society into the Union of Composers. In fact, as an excluded member, he was in an exclusive company: George Enescu, Dinu Lipatti... This, despite his being elected as a member of the Romanian Academy. Made up forgotten, considered undesirable, Constantin Brăiloiu suffered during his last years, as well as afterward, for a certain period of time, a treatment that nowadays is impossible to understand. Yet, his works and the colossal contribution to the lifting up of the musical art could not remain distorted and minimized for ever. Constantin Brăiloiu re-entered the Great Gate of Romanian culture during the last years of the totalitarian regime, own to the volumes printed by the Musical Publishing House under the generic title *Opere* [Works]. Unfortunately, this action was not finalized yet, the publishing of Brăiloiu's correspondence still waiting. It is also waiting the monograph that would illustrate his wonderful, complex and extraordinary personality. Until then, we all remain profoundly indebted to him.

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CONSTANTIN BRĂILOIU AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZED FOLKLORE RESEARCH

SABINA ISPAS

It is for the second time in 15 years that Constantin Brăiloiu's name is heard in the Main Hall of the Romanian Academy in a festive context. He was elected a correspondent member of this prestigious institution on May 30, 1946; nevertheless, after the 1948 reform he was ignored, as it was the case for many Romanian personalities who, after World War II, were subjected to cultural boycott. In 1993, on the occasion of his centenary anniversary – he was born in Bucharest on August 23, 1893, in an old noble family from Oltenia – he was celebrated in a solemn session that gathered within this hall great personalities of the Romanian and foreign cultural life. This time, the ceremony is dedicated to the commemoration of half a century since his passing away – he died on December 20, 1958 – and, as it should, the memory of this remarkable personality is again evoked under the dome of this institution that brings together the elite of Romanian science and culture. It is the same Academy that, throughout a century, has designed and implemented an entire strategy for promoting the language and the historical and cultural particularities by which the Romanians define their own identity and personality.

Most of Brăiloiu's direct disciples, trained by the Professor himself and with whom he collaborated during his fruitful research (undertaken together with the followers of the "sociologic school of Bucharest"), and most of his assistants and collaborators are not present among us anymore. His personality has become part of a history that is rapidly fading away before the generations that are active today. Our contemporaries know the great musicologist through to his works, edited with passion and dedication by one of his most devoted disciples, prof. Emilia Comişel (*Opere/Oeuvres*, vol. I–VI, Editura Muzicală, 1967–1998) and due to his correspondence with the great personalities of European musicology, part of which were published in the volume *Constantin Brăiloiu, a Partisan of Ethnomusicology without Boundaries*, carefully and respectfully edited by Emilia Comişel and Francisc László, in 2006. As stated by the authors of the introductory study in the cited work, "C. Brăiloiu is among the great intellectuals of Romania who, during the 1930s, preserved untouched their attitude of cosmopolitan patriots, important representatives of their nation, open to the spiritual values of other nations,

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supporting the international collaboration unrestricted by political issues [...]. He is not only the most quoted Romanian musicologist in the specialist international literature, but the only Romanian scientist whose work is internationally considered as a compulsory reading for all professional ethnomusicologists"[1].

Devoted to a particular field, ethnomusicology, to whose identification and development he actively contributed through the activity he undertook both in Romania and abroad, prof. Brăiloiu played an essential role in what we can call today the institutionalization of research and educational activities.

After the important historical event that was the First World War, the unification of the Romanians within a national state determined the evolution through some significant stages in the process of modernizing the Romanian society and opened vast cultural horizons. After 1918 the Romanian society intended to maintain and strengthen the state, to accelerate the modernization of society through reforms that would improve the economy, to adopt a Fundamental Law that would support the accomplishment of new national aims. An extensive agrarian reform was necessary and the support of the small farm owners. The political and cultural scenes called for debates that were to include the most important segments of the Romanian society, due to the size and power of the multiple changes imposed on the Romanian state and society.

"The First World War had generated multiple and significant changes at the level of collective mentality; the mass participation of the people in the military operations raised the awareness of the people regarding their rights. The peasants who were ad-hoc soldiers had gradually become citizen-soldiers". The inter-war period underlined its personality through this remarkable effort to define the Romanian cultural identity. It was a period rich in energies, a lively one, focused on solidarity, but at the same time a period of disputes and divisions. "The self-analysis of the cultural personalities and the intellectual elite generated questions and dilemmas, such as who are the Romanians, what are the features of the Romanian culture, what are the features of our psychology, what are the similarities and the differences between the Romanian culture and the other smaller or greater cultures; to what extent are we able to bring original contributions to the European culture; how can we stand out from those homogenizing general cultural tendencies and elements and, at the same time, to keep ourselves within the great family of European cultures... Within this context the great importance given to the rural universe can be noticed"[2].

The Romanian cultural and political elites had to take responsibility for the course that the development of the country had to follow. That process was mainly conditioned by the re-evaluation, rethinking and redefining of what we generally term as *national specificity*. At that time, just as today, the debates were focused

[1] Emilia Comişel, Francisc László, *Constantin Brăiloiu (1893–1958), partizan al etnomuzicologiei fără frontiere*, p. 68.

[2] Radu Toader, *Paradox, ruptură şi continuitate în istoria culturii româneşti*.

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on Romania's relations with the West-European societies and cultures, but also with the other nations of the world. The traditional and European patterns were notions that often seemed to be in contradiction; nevertheless, in many fields, the intellectuals found the strategies that would balance the two tendencies that, if applied exclusively, may have triggered cultural excesses with unwanted effects. The Romanian elites, whose connections with the pre-war Romanian ideas and realities was uninterrupted, attempted to update and rethink, in ideology and doctrine, the precepts that guided the ancestors. Among those, the issue of redefining the *national specificity* was of a vital importance, and one of its main components was the *popular culture*. Regarding these processes, Brăiloiu, referring to the activities in the field of musicology, made the following statement: "Our social and spiritual being takes shape gradually [...]. We seem to notice a possibility for reconciliation between the ancient local memories and the gifts of the modern foreign lands" (Brăiloiu, *10 Years of Work in the RCS*). Then, just as today, all hope focused upon the "young generation", who were training in schools and universities, a generation that M. Eliade considered "free" to accomplish "great deeds".

Within this context, Brăiloiu outlined and implemented the selection and study of the folk culture in an institutionalized system, the scholar being one of the founders of the Romanian ethnomusicology. The training and extensive activity period of the scholar overlapped almost exactly with the period marked by the affirmation of national specificity in Europe and beyond, but also by the emergence and later the development of various forms of nationalism or internationalist approach; paradoxically, those directions seem to take shape more and more evidently in the contemporary world, with new coordinates and, of course, with other purposes. In all the cases, the socio-economical, political and cultural environments require the establishment of systematic structures, for the personalities and state organisms to be able to act coherently and efficiently. Placed in such a European environment, Brăiloiu demonstrated what we may call "the vocation of institutionalizing", which was occurring in conjunction with to what Andre Schaeffner defined as "the genius of method". Therefore, since 1918, together with Ernest Ansermet and Jules Nicati, he laid the foundation of the Independent Society of Music Composers of Geneva. Back in Romania, after studying in Austria, Switzerland, and France, shortly after the founding of the United Romania, in 1920 he founded the Society of Romanian Composers, together with M. Andricu, A. Alessandrescu, Dim. Cuclin, M. Jora, Dim. Kiriac, and assigned the first presidency to George Enescu. For many years, Constantin Brăiloiu would be the general secretary of that organism, which was intended to support the Romanian music and its creators. In 1993, Octavian Lazăr Cosma would write: "C. Brăiloiu dedicated almost a quarter century of his life... unceasingly and without restraint, to the Society of Romanian Composers, whose founder he was, outlining it, assigning it artistic role and sense, juridical

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personality, social base, in order to increase the importance and visibility of Romanian music"[3].

A few years later, following the requirements of the national strategies for the development and modernisation of Romania, and in full agreement with all the international directions in the field of ethnomusicology, a branch founded with his support, in 1928 Brăiloiu founded the de Folklore Archive of the Society of Romanian Composers. Within this framework and in collaboration with the great personalities that worked in the so-called Sociological School of Bucharest, C. Brăiloiu elaborated the "fabulous research method", as termed by Tiberiu Alexandru, according to whose indications the documents gathered here "were selected, organized and studied". It was the first institutionalized structure whose task was to identify, transcript, archive, preserve and give value to a significant part of what the modern specialists call "deep culture" or "intangible heritage". Starting from this institutionalized form, the professor attempted to organize a State Institute of Music Folklore, whose purpose was to be "the research of the Romanian folklore music and its preserving through the means of sound recording, as well as the study of the popular activities related to music"[4]. His attempts took longer than allowed by the dramatic events after World War II, and the project took shape only in 1949, as the Institute of Folklore. Its first director was the musicologist Harry Brauner, Brăiloiu's close collaborator. Multidisciplinary since its founding (it was concerned with the presence of folklore in all types of languages, in syncretism), in 1963 it became the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore.

After working at the History and Aesthetics of Music Department within the Royal Academy of Music of Bucharest since 1921, C. Brăiloiu was involved in organizing the Religious Academy of Music within the Romanian Patriarchy, whose rector he was for several years, his name being directly connected to the founding of the History of Music and Religious Music Departments.

In 1943, Brăiloiu held a series of conferences and took part in various exhibitions, organized by the Ministry of National Propaganda, in France and Switzerland. In 1944, he was appointed technical counselor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the Romanian Legation in Berne. There he collaborated with Eugène Pittard for the founding, in 1945, of the International Archive of Folklore Music with the Museum of Ethnography of Geneva, where he worked for a while as a technical Director.

Until 1958, the year of his death, the scholar intensively participated in the founding, strengthening and proper functioning of some very important institutional systems, whose international efficiency can be still noticed nowadays.

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[3] Octavian Lazăr, *Constantin Brăiloiu şi „Societatea Compozitorilor români"*; in *Centenar Constantin Brăiloiu*, p. 48.

[4] Tiberiu Alexandru, Constantin Brăiloiu şi „Institutul de Folclor Muzical", p. 72.

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"An intellectual dedicated to the creeds of great-scale culture, Brăiloiu, like his important contemporaries – Enescu, Lipatti, Rebreanu, Sadoveanu, Brâncuşi, Ţuculescu, Ţiţeica, Coandă, Călinescu, Vianu, Negulescu, Cioran, Rădulescu-Motru, Eliade, Iorga, Pârvan, Ionescu, etc. – did not use his erudition and creative force in sterile paradoxes, but in significant deeds, in enunciations that are very important to the destiny of art and the contemporary way of thinking"[5] (Sava, p. 72).

Within the dynamics of modern society, when the art globalization processes are active and the patterns according to which various human communities survive are restructuring and undergo deep changes, Constantin Brăiloiu's research directions and organizational initiatives prove to be extremely relevant today.

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[5] Iosif Sava, *Brăiloiu şi cultura timpului*, p. 72.

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CONSTANTIN BRĂILOIU, LANDMARK OF THE ROMANIAN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

MARIAN LUPAŞCU

In 1928, when he founded the "Folklore Archive", Constantin Brăiloiu was a fine and renowned composer and musicologist, secretary of the Society of Romanian Composers, and famous both in his country and abroad. That explains the importance he gave to folklore and his committement to this field, critics placing him among the „composers with a folklorist's spirit"[1].

Following the example provided by Dumitru Georgescu Kiriac, his professor, Brăiloiu was very interested in field research and in the sound recording. He established a rigorous method for research, sound recording, archiving, and writing down of poetic texts and information, as well as for musical transcripts[2].

A transcript was made after the selection of a "type-informant" (representative for categories of age, gender, competence).

The sound recording was made on phonograph cylinders. As the dictated poetic text underwent changes when it was sung, the researcher wrote down those changes during the recording. Thus, Brăiloiu noticed the existence of *rules of the sung verse*, which represented the basis for one of his extensive academic essays[3].

The phonogram is related to the identification files of the song, to information regarding theme, aesthetics, terminology, frequency, informer, instrument, repertory and direct observation, along with photographs and films, as well as literary and musical transcripts. All the elements are filed up in the chronological order in which the cylinders were archived, and by counties. The

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[1] André Schaeffner, *Bibliographie des travaux de Constantin Brăiloiu*, in "Revue de Musicologie", no. 43 (1959), juillet, pp. 3–4.

[2] Constantin Brăiloiu, *Opere Oeuvres*, IV, Preface, translation and editing by Emilia Comişel, Bucureşti, Editura Muzicală, 1979, pp. 31–68; *Outline of a Method of Musical Folklore* (A translation from the French), in "Ethnomusicology", Journal of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Volume XIV (September 1970), Number 3 [translated by Margaret Mooney, Edited by Ann Briegleb and Mariana Kahane], pp. 389–417; *Problèmes d'Ethnomusicologie*, Textes réunis et préfacés par Gilbert Rouget, Publication placée sous le patronage de la Société française de musicologie, Genève, Minkoff Reprint, 1973, pp. 3–40; *Problems of Ethnomusicology*, Edited and Translated by A.L. Lloyd, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

[3] Constantin Brăiloiu, *Opere*, I, Translation and preface by Emilia Comişel, Bucureşti, Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor [...], 1967, pp. 15–118.

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final purpose was to record, in a form as realistic as possible, the initial syncretism of the folkloric phenomenon. Specialists considered Brăiloiu's method as a model of rigor and complexity. He was considered to be a "genius of method"[4].

His multidisciplnary experience contributed to studies regarding the poetic, melodic and rhythmic structures, genres and styles, the musical life of the village, the existence of certain systems governed by laws and applied empirically by performers, as well as to his superior theories. Brăiloiu was influenced by his association to the Romanian School of Sociology, managed by the professor Dimitrie Gusti[5]. To him, folklore – a social product of multiple creators – has a practical purpose, fulfilling the needs of the community, and is structured according to specific systems that constantly adjust themselves through variation.

In his research, Brăiloiu covered a vast geographical and thematic area, with the support of some enthusiastic students who were interested in folklore studies field and in Professor's intellectual capacity, encyclopedic knowledge, and charisma[6]. In time, some of them left the field. Others dedicated their lives to folklore research: Harry Brauner, Tiberiu Alexandru, Paula Carp, Ilarion Cocişiu, Emilia Comişel, Gheorghe Ciobanu, Ioan Nicola, Gheorghe Ciobanu. Together with the professor Mihai Pop, a philologist, was often present in the field. All of them became famous specialists, developed the Romanian school of folklore and trained new generations of researchers who, in turn, elaborated studies, anthologies, typologies and published sound documents.

Brăiloiu was an excellent organizer. He knew how to select his people and how to make them outdo themselves. He trained his young collaborators in all the directions of the field, although, in time, certain specializations developed: collection (Brauner, Cocişiu, Comişel), musical transcription (Carp), disc recording and archive organizing (Alexandru), promotion of the Romanian performers abroad (Brauner), etc. Gheorghe A Bălaşei, a passionate folklorist and technician, invented, with Brăiloiu's support (who read for him articles from foreign magazines), an electro-magnetic pick-up head with a glass needle for the phonograph, an idea that had been rejected by foreign specialists as unfeasible. The experiments began in 1937, and in March 1940 the first recordings were accomplished with the electric phonograph connected to a speaker and a microphone. The archive produced electric recordings on wax cylinders, many of the recordings being technically superior to the industrial ones, on gramophone disks.

During the harsh period between 1941 and 1944 Brăiloiu moved the Archive in order to protect it from destruction. His influence was so great that the move was undertaken in army carriages, with caution, without any damage.

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[4] André Schaeffner, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[5] Constantin Brăiloiu, *Opere Oeuvres*, IV, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–258.

[6] Paula Carp, *Despre începuturile „Arhivei de folklore" a Societăţii Compozitorilor Români*, în „Muzica", 1, ianuarie (1979), pp. 25–28.

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He never abandoned his collaborators. His extensive correspondence, partially recovered from those who were close to him, proves that after 1943 the musicologist continued to manage the Archive from abroad. Moreover, he silently coordinated the scientific activity of the Institute of Folklore, founded in 1949 and managed by Harry Brauner. The letters and packages containing articles and studies (manuscripts or published editions), even disks, secretly left the country and reached Geneva and Paris. Therefore Brăiloiu initiated and coordinated Paula Carp's study on *doina*, helped her with many suggestions, sometimes revising his own statements in his studies. Afterwards, starting from this work, he also supervised the research undertaken by Paula Carp, who, in order to facilitate the comparative perspective, elaborated a method for archiving the Romanian folkloric songs, one in relation to another, based on their integration within an organic system[7]. The method is still valid and in use. Brăiloiu was aware of the work of researchers he had not meet, employed after 1949. In a letter addressed to Tiberiu Alexandru he congratulated Mariana Kahane for her study on the Pădureni region folklore. He loved Romania and the Archive so much that in 1955 he wrote to Tiberiu that he had seen in an automobile exhibition a car that was fit for field research and that he wanted to buy it, asking him how he could send it back to the country.

Brăiloiu was also concerned with the preservation of sound documents. He presented in Paris, in 1937, at the first International Folklore Congress, a paper focused on recording techniques. The phonograph cylinders had technical downsides and were at risk of degradation. As the first attempt to copy them on discs failed[8], he decided to bring the performers to the capital and to record the songs again in disk format.

Brăiloiu is the first Romanian editor of scientific, non-commercial disks. Starting in 1929, he ordered and created, with the producers' support, 851 disks that include 1784 songs[9]. The recordings were made under his direct supervision, sometimes with the support of his collaborators. Most of the disks include materials from the Romania, but also from other geographical areas inhabited by Romanians. Brăiloiu's final goal was the elaboration of an extensive sound anthology, organized by genre and region, accompanied by explanatory texts, work that would have included the recordings on the scientific disks made in the previous stages[10].

In 1941, he edited the first discography album of the planned anthology, an album called *Ţara Oaşului (Satu Mare)*. During the same year, the ethnomusicologist edited three more albums[11], with the support of the Ministry of

[7] Paula Carp, *Notarea relativă a melodiilor populare pe baza integrării lor într-un sistem organic*, in „Revista de folclor", 5 (1960), no. 1–2, pp. 7–24.

[8] Tiberiu Alexandru, *Constantin Brăiloiu şi valorificarea înregistrărilor de muzică populară*, în *Folcloristică, Organologie, Muzicologie*, Bucureşti, Editura Muzicală, 1978, p. 115.

[9] *Ibidem*, p. 117.

[10] *Ibidem*, pp. 118–120.

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 122.

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National Propaganda: two of them were called *Romanian Popular Dances,* and the last one *Romanian Peasant Wedding in Transylvania.*

In 1950 the album *Musique populaire roumaine* was published in Paris, edited by Département d'ethnologie musicale du Musée de l'Homme, with Brăiloiu's support. The recordings were made in Romania in 1935–1940 by Constantin Brăiloiu and Tiberiu Alexandru.

Between 1951 and 1958, Brăiloiu initiated and took part in the editing of the series *Collection universelle de musique populaire enregistrée*, produced by the Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire (AIMP), in which Romanian folklore, illustrated in four discs (14 songs) is best represented.

After the establishment of the Institute of Folklore (1949), editing of disks in Romania was continued by Tiberiu Alexandru, with the support of Alexandru Amzulescu, and afterwards by Emilia Comişel and Ovidiu Bârlea, Constantin Costea, Speranţa Rădulescu and Carmen Betea. The most important series are: *The Anthology of Romanian Folklore Music; Romanian Folk Dances; The Romanian National Collection of Folklore*[12].

Starting in 1999 the publishing of document recordings resumed, edited by Marian Lupaşcu in CD format, along with information brochures, musical and text transcripts, images, comments etc. The new scientific series, *Romanian Folk Archives*, was supported by the didactic one, *Musical Folklore from Brăila* and by a series intended for the general public, *Collection Music. Restitutions.*

Works in CD–ROM format were also completed, such as *Romanian Ethnographic Landscapes* (2000), and DVD–ROM format, *The Wood Civilization in Romania* (2008).

Brăiloiu was a visionary scholar who laid the foundations of all the segments of ethno-musicology, and that is the reason why his work has not become obsolete, rather on the contrary. Each generation of researchers found in his studies ideas applicable to the everyday reality, an aspect that may seem paradoxical for a field such the musical folklore, undergoing ongoing change. Moreover, when reading Brăiloiu's work, each researcher discovers new meanings all the time. He did not provide postulates, but, more than anything else, he taught us how to think and research. The great quality of his work resides in the presentation of the specific mechanisms through which the concrete information is organized into theoretic models. In ethno-musicology, as in every other science, the directions, themes and approaches changed periodically, but the landmark is still there. Therefore, we cannot ignore Brăiloiu, we can only start from what he has achieved.

[12] Marian Lupaşcu, *Valorificarea discografică a arhivei institutului*, in „Anuarul Institutului de Etnografie şi Folclor «Constantin Brăiloiu»", 1998–1999, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 2002, pp. 133–140.

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BRĂILOIU À GENÈVE: L'ACHÈVEMENT D'UNE ŒUVRE

LAURENT AUBERT

Il est des personnalités dont la rencontre nous marque de façon radicale. De telles rencontres peuvent être réelles – et dès lors réciproques – ou seulement virtuelles – et donc univoques –, à travers l'exemple ou l'œuvre, disons les «traces» que telle ou telle figure marquante aura laissées pour la postérité. Dans ce dernier cas, à un certain moment de notre vie, nous sommes amenés à découvrir ces traces, et, par une mystérieuse alchimie de l'esprit, à y mettre nos pieds en nous rendant compte qu'elles dessinent un chemin dont la direction nous attire ou dans laquelle nous sommes déjà engagés plus ou moins consciemment, plus ou moins profondément.

Quelle qu'en soit l'orientation, une quête a toujours besoin de guides, de garde-fous, qui nous éclairent et nous évitent de tomber dans les pièges de l'existence – ce n'est pas une question de temps; nous n'avons certes pas de temps à perdre, mais le temps compte en définitive bien peu dans la perspective de la quête. Non, il s'agit plutôt de la prise de conscience d'affinités, d'affinités subtiles qui nous rendent l'exemple d'une vie ou d'une œuvre hautement significatif à un moment donné de notre quête. Il y aura désormais un avant et un après par rapport à cette découverte, à cet instant décisif: un avant plus ou moins obscur et tâtonnant, et un après lumineux et inspiré; en tout cas la certitude que nos intuitions n'étaient pas vaines, et qu'elles correspondent à une réalité déjà identifiée par celles ou ceux qui nous ont précédés sur le chemin et en qui nous aurons reconnu des modèles.

C'est ainsi que ce qu'on appelle improprement les hasards de l'existence m'ont un jour fait découvrir l'œuvre de Constantin Brăiloiu: non seulement son œuvre écrite, qui est déjà en soi considérable; mais surtout les idéaux et les convictions ayant animé les quinze dernières années de sa vie, et dont l'exemple allait en tout cas marquer ma démarche et mon travail d'ethnomusicologue.

Si, en quittant la Roumanie en 1943, Brăiloiu avait eu le soin d'emporter avec lui de nombreuses copies de ses documents de recherche et de ses enregistrements de terrain, c'est probablement qu'il pressentait que son éloignement serait de longue durée. Le fait d'avoir alors été nommé conseiller culturel auprès de la légation roumaine de Berne – un rôle qui lui convenait bien mal, reconnaissons-le –

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dut ainsi lui apparaître comme un signe de la providence. Il pressentait certainement les risques d'obscurantisme qui menaçaient alors sa patrie, et, si son exil n'a jamais pris les allures d'une fuite délibérée, il fut cependant définitif, puisque Brăiloiu ne retournera plus jamais dans sa chère Roumanie natale.

Ces raisons conjoncturelles en cachent en fait de plus profondes, autrement plus importantes dans la perspective qui nous intéresse ici. D'une certaine manière, Brăiloiu avait accompli tout ce qu'il avait à faire en Roumanie, et les recherches sur la vie musicale des villages roumains, dont il fut l'initiateur (cf. Brăiloiu 1960), ont en effet pu être poursuivies et développées jusqu'à aujourd'hui par des collaborateurs et des successeurs de talent. Mais il restait à Brăiloiu à effectuer la synthèse de son œuvre, laquelle nécessitait un certain éloignement, une certaine distance « académique » par rapport à ses terrains de jeunesse.

Cette synthèse allait prendre forme lors de ses années genevoises et parisiennes, de 1944 à son décès en 1958 (cf. Aubert 1985). C'est durant cette période qu'il eut l'occasion de confronter ses matériaux roumains à ceux d'autres traditions musicales, et de dégager de cette comparaison des principes dont la plupart demeurent pleinement valables jusqu'à aujourd'hui: je pense à ses écrits sur de la création musicale collective, sur les systèmes musicaux, sur les rythmes, sur les universaux en musique, ou encore sur l'ethnomusicologie en tant que discipline à part entière, distincte aussi bien de la musicologie «classique» que des études folkloriques de la période post-romantique. Tous ces textes ont déjà marqué des générations de chercheurs, non seulement en Roumanie, mais en Europe et dans le monde, et tout particulièrement dans les pays francophone, grâce à la remarquable édition des *Problèmes d'ethnomusicologie* de Brăiloiu réalisée par Gilbert Rouget en 1973, – et, dans une moindre mesure, italophones et anglophones, respectivement à travers les éditions de Diego Carpitella en 1978 et 1982, et d'Albert Lloyd en 1984[1].

Mais une des plus grandes réalisations de cette ultime phase de l'œuvre de Brăiloiu, en tout cas une des plus significatives, fut la fondation, à Genève, des Archives internationales de musique populaire (AIMP), dont le but, tel qu'il l'avait lui-même défini en 1949, était triple:

„1. Sauver des documents musicaux précieux.

2. Mettre dans la circulation scientifique internationale les matériaux nécessaires à une étude comparative étendue.

3. Faciliter les contacts de pays à pays par le moyen de la musique populaire "[2].

Ces trois objectifs qu'il s'était tracés sont loin d'être anodins, et, dans leur simplicité, ils synthétisent les principaux enjeux de la discipline dans le mode

[1] Rappelons par ailleurs que l'édition intégrale en six volumes des *Œuvres/Opere* de Brăiloiu a été publiée à Bucarest par Emilia Comişel de 1967 à 1998.

[2] Lettre circulaire adressée par Brăiloiu à ses collègues, juillet 1949.

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contemporain: tout d'abord l'*ethnomusicologie d'urgence*, qui consiste à agir pour préserver la mémoire d'expressions musicales de tradition orale menacées de disparition ou de transformation radicale à plus ou moins court terme; ensuite le *comparatisme* et la recherche d'universaux, qui allait contribuer à réunir les professionnels sur des thèmes de portée générale, tout en leur permettant de mieux diffuser les résultats de leurs travaux; et enfin l'*ethnomusicologie appliquée*, sans laquelle toute la recherche scientifique ne serait en définitive que lettre morte.

Pour ce faire, Brăiloiu n'a pas seulement créé à Genève l'un des plus importants fonds documentaires à vocation interculturelle de son époque ; mais il a aussi publié une importante collection de disques 78 tours, la *Collection universelle de musique populaire enregistrée*, dont les quarante volumes parurent de 1951 à 1958, l'année de son décès. Cette collection a d'ailleurs une valeur historique, puisqu'elle est notamment la première du genre qui fut éditée sous les auspices de l'UNESCO.

Cette entreprise était appelée à durer, puisque aujourd'hui, cinquante ans après le décès de leur fondateur, les AIMP sont toujours bien vivantes, et plus actives que jamais, comme en témoignent d'une part les quatre-vingt-quatre CDs que comporte actuellement leur collection de disques[3], et d'autre part leur intégration au projet-pilote que constitue le réseau ethnoArc[4]. Si l'on considère l'isolement dans lequel survivent actuellement la plupart des archives ethnomusicologiques européennes, la création de ce réseau archivistique entre Bucarest, Budapest, Berlin et Genève me semble être un geste hautement significatif, non seulement parce qu'il renoue des liens collégiaux longtemps distendus, mais surtout parce qu'il s'inscrit dans un travail de mémoire indispensable à l'ère de la mondialisation technologique et de l'uniformisation culturelle de notre petite planète.

À cet égard, nous serons longtemps redevables aux vertus cultivées par ces précurseurs que furent Brăiloiu et ses contemporains; et, parmi ces vertus, j'aimerais en citer trois, qui me semblent fondamentales, et sans lesquelles nous n'en serions aujourd'hui pas là: la curiosité scientifique, l'intuition et la conviction.

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[3] Voir <http://www.ville-ge.ch/meg/cd.php>.

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CONSTANTIN BRĂILOIU AND THE ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE EASTERN ROMANIAN AREA

VASILE CHISELIȚĂ

A spiritual model marked by a phenomenal generating force, a researcher with an authentic European formation and vocation, and the last, but not the least, a genuine cultural philosopher – Constantin Brăiloiu (1893–1958) takes up an honorable place among the greatest personalities of the modern world, personalities who offered to the mankind sense, value and profoundness. In the memorable year 2008 we mark half a century since Constantin Brăiloiu has passed into eternity – the scientist who has also been a remarkable folklorist, musicologist, musical critic, composer, professor, founder of several institutions and also an animator of the national and international cultural life. He gained recognition, first of all, as a certified builder of views, director of opinions, and pioneer in the field of the musical folklore. His theoretical work is exemplary through its writing rigor and its profoundness of ideas, and it laid the foundation of the Romanian musicological school, as well as of *the ethnomusicology*, the modern science of folk music. His methodological system, centered on a large comparative and cross-disciplinary perspective, has revolutionized the analytical thinking. Therefore, it has prepared the terrain for a new direction in humanities, a direction that since the '60s got to be known as *cultural anthropology*, with important contributions made by certain Western scholars (Alan Merriam, John Blacking, Mantle Hood, Bruno Nettle and others).

As musician and researcher, Brăiloiu has been constantly concerned with the question of the national character in art. This determined him to manifest a large consideration towards the folk creation in which he hoped to discover *"the symbols of our musical originality"*, the signs of the Romanian cultural identity, as well as profound features that clearly define his own musical portrait in the context of a dialogue among the peoples and nations of the modern world. Thus, the geo-cultural heritage of the native country, the rich and presumptuously diverse musical dialects and nonetheless the originality of the peasant musical life will soon become the major themes in his scientific work. Simultaneously, his activity and research aspirations have been found in parallel with the program of Dimitrie

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Gusti's *Sociological School in Bucharest*, school that was crossing, in the 1920–30s, a stage of a full academic success and development. Therefore, it is not quite accidental the fact that in the context of this school Constantin Brăiloiu has elaborated and applied with accuracy its famous method of musical folklore, unique and original by itself, for those time (1931). His method was defining the role, the place, the sense and the expectations of the so-called "*autonomous rural musicology*", a veritable *"science of peasant music"* within the framework of the sociological monographic researches [Brăiloiu:1979, 33–68].

The Eastern Romanian zone has definitely taken a particular place in the geographical structure of Brăiloiu's ethnomusicological field investigations. The scholar has demonstrated a vivid and inexhaustible interest in knowing the *"eastern outposts"* of the traditional Romanian culture, placed in the historical circumstances of Slavonic confluence (Russians or Ruthenians, Hutsuls, Ukrainians). By his direct contribution, in 1928, in the central part of Bessarabia, called *Codru,* the first campaign of scientific musical folklore collection started. (Comişel: 1994, 30; Ghilaş: 1994, 170-172). Between august 8 and august 21, during 14 days of methodical work and rigorously organized process, that took place in the localities Lozova, Huzun (Miclăuşeni), Căpriana, Ciuciuleni and Chişinău (Lăpuşna district), including also informants from the Vărojeni village (Orhei district), Brăiloiu marks an important page in the phonograph recording history: more than 150 Bessarabian vocal and instrumental creations, among which several lyrical or lyrical-epical songs, laments, wedding songs, pastoral songs, dance tunes, and several "lăutar's" creations. Brăiloiu was surprised by the richness, diversity, and by the details of the native repertoire. He therefore remarked – in an interview for the newspaper *Dimineaţa,* on August 30, 1928 – the tenaciousness of the old performing style of the traditional music, better preserved there, in comparison with other Romanian ethnographical regions, previously analyzed in his own studies. With this occasion, he especially underlined the authenticity, the archaic blast and the affective profoundness of the native laments, as well as the beauty and the expressiveness of the epical-narrative songs, many of them historical, usually performed by old men. Also, he remarked the joyfulness and the enthusiasm of numerous drinking songs (*cântece de pahar*) with their dance character (a kind of *dances on the spot),* reflecting a peasant version of those *gathering* or *for entertainment* songs (*cântece de lume* or *cântece de societate*), well-known in the urban and the noble societies, in the 17th–19th centuries, and found nowadays in almost all folk parties, called by the natives *cumpanii.* With the acuteness of a researcher's analytical spirit and with the delicacy of a musician's perception, Brăiloiu also spotlighted the magnificence and the imposing character of the *group working* songs, called *de deal* – an important category of creations in the Bessarabian repertory, *"distinguished by their special pattern and cadences as well by the slow and improvising performance"* [Brăiloiu, 1998: 348].

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For the first time, he discovers in Chişinău city, the native "lăutar" music expert, the violinist and the director of a traditional instrumental ensemble (*taraf*) Timofei Neaga (or Timofte Neagu who was, at this time, age 55) – father of composer Stefan Neaga. Brăiloiu will be recording from Timofei Neaga more than 25 wedding and dancing tunes [A.I.E.F. – C.F.]. Actually, the repertory of this lăutar will provide him with an emblematical ritual creation of that area, including the wedding bride's song *Ia-n taci, Lado, nu mai plânge,* which will become the object of a formidable maestro's choral processing and harmonization, published in 1943 by *The Society of Romanian Composers* [Vasile: 1992, 133]. Both the titles of the collected pieces and the rich list of annexed information emphasize important aspects concerning the stage of evolution of the traditional Bessarabian music in the 1920s. (That is, the genuine structure, the functional dominants, the circulation, the aesthetical preferences, the stylistic trends, the processes of modernization or urbanization, the cross-cultural relations in folklore etc.) This first contact that Brăiloiu established with the field in the left side of the Prut River significantly contributed to the realization of another project that implied the idea of a phonogram collection of Moldavian folklore. This project was officially announced in the early 1900's, in *The Russian Musical Magazine*, by V.I. Rebikov, the director of the Chisinau branch of *The Russian Musical Society* (April 8–15, no. 15–16). Unfortunately, because of reasons that still remain unknown, that project never got realized [Breazul: 1941, 420–421].

Entailed by the irresistible cultural pole of the oriental Romanian character, the researcher will later return in the field, several times: in 1932 (at Căpriana, Durleşti and Chişinău) and in 1936 (at Nişcani, Parcani and Sadova, Lăpuşna district), where he recorded about 90 pieces. But some sources indicate that Brăiloiu was present even in the framework of the well-known monographic campaign from Cornova-Orhei, that took place in 1931 [Şoimaru: 2000, 313, 564], when he recorded (with the contribution of his follower, Harry Brauner) a number of more than 200 songs and instrumental tunes. In 1940 he also made some other occasional recordings, using as main informants people from the village Antoneşti (Cetatea Albă district), which came to Bucharest. Therefore, the whole number of the recordings that originated from Bessarabia's informants, gathered with the direct contribution of the maestro, raises up to about 400–450 pieces.

The method of field investigation, elaborated and programmatically explained by Brăiloiu in 1927, during the conference *On the musical folklore in the monographic research* [Brăiloiu: 1979, 69–92], catalyzed the process of scientific documentation on folkloric creation in the interwar period. This fact sustained a veritable cultural movement that took place especially in the eastern regions of the Romanian cultural and spiritual boundaries, Bessarabia and Bucovina. Relevant in this matter are the sustainable efforts of the many local specialists and institutions to preserve the traditional cultural heritage. For this purpose, between 1928 and 1931,

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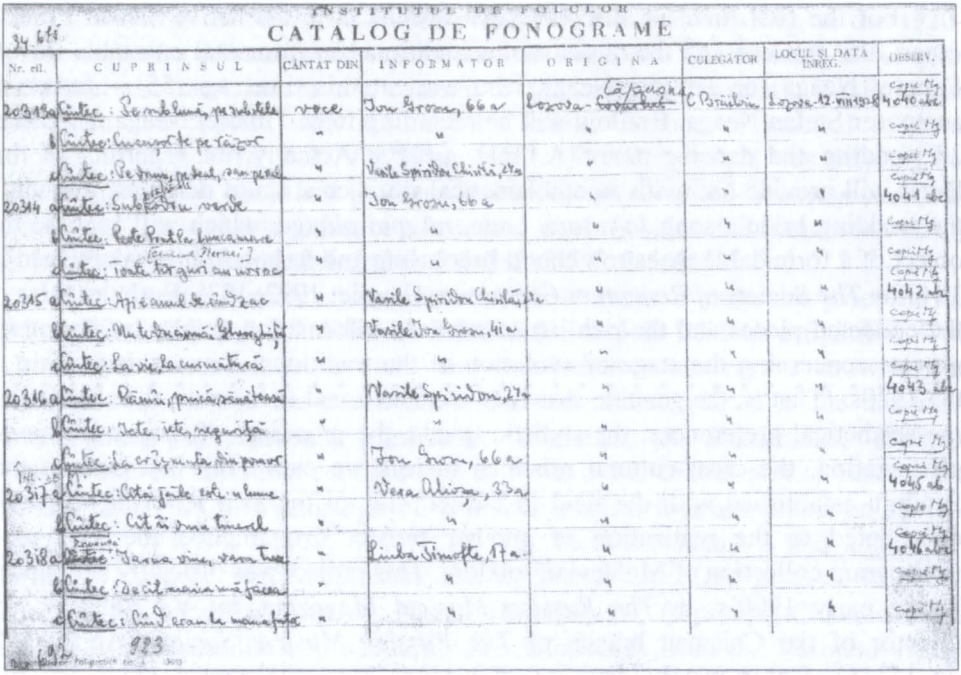
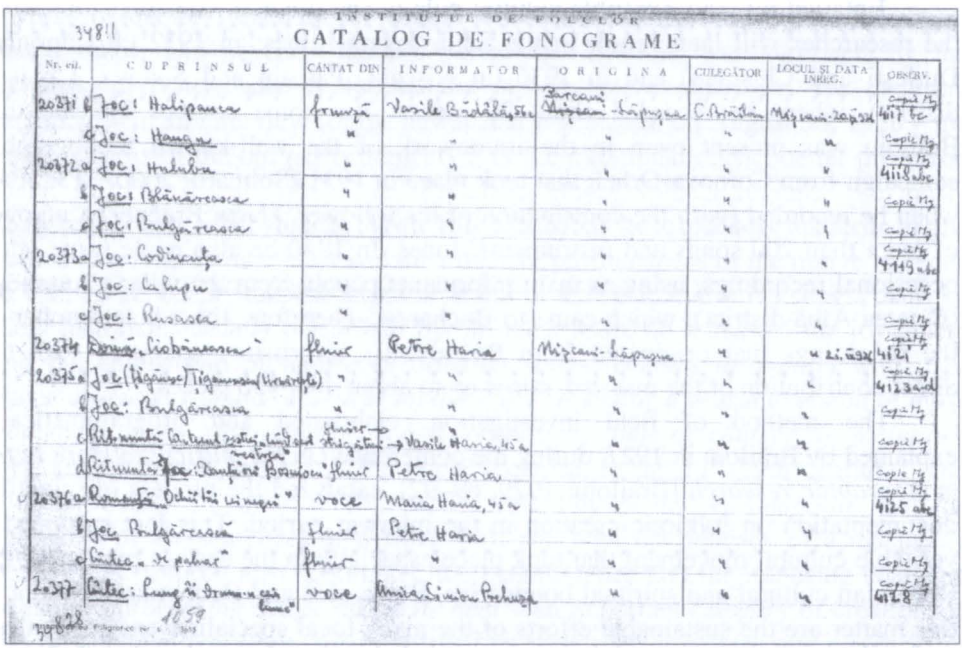

INSTITUTUL DE FOLCLOR
CATALOG DE FONOGRAME

Nr. crt.	CUPRINSUL	CÂNTAT DIN	INFORMATOR	ORIGINA	CULEGĂTOR	LOCUL ȘI DATA ÎNREG.	OBSERV.
20313a	Cântec: Se-mbolnăvi, pe-ndelete	voce	Ion Grosu, 66 a	Lozova - Căpușna	C. Brăiloiu	Lozova 12 VIII 1928	Copii Mț 4040 abc
b	Cântec: Lucruțe pe răzor	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Cântec: Pe drum, pe-ndelete, sus pe-o	"	Varila Spiridon Chiriță, 47a	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20314 a	Cântec: Sub [illegible] verde	"	Ion Grosu, 66 a	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4041 abc
b	Cântec: Poate Prodan bucăcanu	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Cântec: Foaie [Cântecul Mierei]	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
d	Cântec: Foaie, târguri cu inimă	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20315 a	Cântec: Apă-i amar de-mi zac	"	Varila Spiridon Chiriță, 47a	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4042 abc
b	Cântec: Nu te-ntrista, [illegible]	"	Varila Ion Grosu, 41 a	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Cântec: La vie, la curmătură	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20316 a	Cântec: Rămâi, rămâi zănatească	"	Varila Spiridon, 27a	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4043 abc
b	Cântec: Vete, vete, neguriță	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Cântec: La cerișenița din pomet	"	Ion Grosu, 66 a	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20317 a	Cântec: Cătă foaie este-n lume	"	Vera Alioșa, 33a	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4045 ab
b	Cântec: Cât îi dragă tinerel	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20318 a	Cântec: Vara vine, vara trece	"	Liuba Timofte, 17a	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4046 abc
b	Cântec: De cât mai mă jăcuia	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Cântec: Lină-i seara la mănăstire	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț

Fig. 1. Extract from the phonogram catalogue: Lozova, 1928.


INSTITUTUL DE FOLCLOR
CATALOG DE FONOGRAME

Nr. crt.	CUPRINSUL	CÂNTAT DIN	INFORMATOR	ORIGINA	CULEGĂTOR	LOCUL ȘI DATA ÎNREG.	OBSERV.
20371 b	Joc: Haliparca	frunză	Varila Bădălău, 56a	Nișcani - Căpușna	C. Brăiloiu	Nișcani 20 VIII 1936	Copii Mț 4117 bc
c	Joc: Hangu	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20372 a	Joc: Hrubna	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4118 abc
b	Joc: Ștefănărcească	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Joc: Bulgărească	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20373 a	Joc: Codrencuța	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4119 abc
b	Joc: La lupu	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Joc: Rusească	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20374	Doină: Lichărească	fluier	Petre Haria	Nișcani - Căpușna	"	" 21 VIII 1936	Copii Mț 4121
20375 a	Joc (Căpușna) Țigănească (Hrubna)	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4123 abcd
b	Joc: Bulgărească	"	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Ritmuri [illegible]	fluier	Varila Haria, 41 a	"	"	"	Copii Mț
d	Ritmuri Joc: Dănțuiește Bozieu	fluier	Petre Haria	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20376 a	Romanță: Ochiții ei negri	voce	Maria Haria, 45 a	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4125 abc
b	Joc: Bulgărească	fluier	Petre Haria	"	"	"	Copii Mț
c	Cântec: Și pahar	fluier	"	"	"	"	Copii Mț
20377	Cântec: Lung și drum-n cale lume	voce	Anica Simion Pochuța	"	"	"	Copii Mț 4128

Fig. 2. Extract from the phonogram catalogue: Nișcani, 1936.

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the composer Alexandru Zirra, director of the *Cernăuți Music and Theater Art Conservatory,* who was inspired by the profoundness and the proficiency of the monographic investigations from the Fundu Moldovei area, initiated a campaign for collecting musical folklore by the use of the phonograph in diverse locations in the northern side of Bucovina (Hlinița, Berhomete, Coțimani, Cuciurul Mare, Iordăneşti, Stârcea and others), fieldwork that also involved the participation of some students. There was a total of 275 pieces collected by Zirra, these phonographic materials representing the specific categories of the local traditions, including Ukrainian and other inhabiting ethnic groups' folklore.

In 1934, *The Romanian Social Institute in Bessarabia* was founded in Chişinău, and as a result, monographic researches in the region intensified. In 1936, under the aegis of this institution, as well as by the contribution of the folklorist Petre Ştefănucă, the composer Vasile Popovici and some other large research teams (each including about 20-30 professionals), special investigation campaigns were organized in Iurceni and Nişcani (Lăpuşna district), Talmaz (Tighina district), and Purcari (Cetatea Albă district). In 1937 – in Copanca (Tighina district), Corcmaz and Palanca (Cetatea Albă district), and in 1938, in Popeştii de Sus (Soroca district), Tabăra, Vâprova and Dişcova (Orhei district). The musical rural traditions' material was recorded using the phonograph, although partly being directly writen by ear. Constantin Brăiloiu joined the research campaign from Nişcani in September 1936. Also accompanied by some bessarabian colleagues, who were eager to learn practically the scientific method of monographical documentation, Brăiloiu collected more than 58 vocal and instrumental pieces. In the same time, George Breazul realized a significant field collection too: more than 210 songs and tunes collected from the well-known bessarabian actor and writer Gheorghe Madan, originating from Truşeni village, Lapuşna district. Also 250 creations from the north-eastern part of Bessarabia, called *Câmpia Sorocii,* were collected by Tatiana Găluşcă. A great part of Gălaşca's materials was published by the end of the 20th century, in collaboration with Ioan Romul Nicola. All in all, by 1939 there were collected about 700 tunes in the region, everything being transmitted to the Romanian Composers Society Archives and nowadays transferred to The Archives of The "Constantin Brăiloiu" Institute for Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest.

Beyond the actual research, the members of the monographic research teams animated a vast movement of social revitalization of the Bessarabian traditional culture. This way, in 1937–1939 there were several concerts organized in Chişinău, with the participation of some groups of singers, instrumentalist and dancers that were selected from the researched villages. A series of creations collected in the field were made public in the programs of different local school choirs, who was participated in several festivals and holidays, in various radio shows in Bucharest or Chişinău, as well as in some musical publications, especially elaborated by composer Mihail Bârcă and professor Vasile Popovici (1939).

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An important page in the field research history in the eastern area is represented by the monographic campaign in the Transnistrian villages, situated beyond the Dniester and the Bug rivers. The first ground investigation in this area was started up by Brăiloiu and lasted three weeks, in October-November 1942, as a response to Anton Golopenția's special invitation. Assisted by the technician Gheorghe Abălașei, by the professor and writer Ion Apostol and other colleagues, he made phonograph recordings in many locations with Moldovan population situated on the right and on the left side the Bug river (as Novogrigorievka, Belousovka, Caspareuca, Lysa Hora, Martinoș, Aleksandrovka, Voznesensk, Horodskaia and others). A. Golopenția, director of the social research group, mentioned in an informative note from 16.11.1942 that at that time "there were collected not only musical pieces, but even stories", considering that phonograph recordings of the native dialect have a great cultural and scientific importance. The second contact with the Transnistrian ground happened in the summer of 1943 (June-July), in the framework of the expedition organized by Traian Herseni, director of the Sociological Research Institute affiliated to the University of Odessa. Together with Ovidiu Bârlea, Anton Golopenția, Constantin Ionescu (who, is the author of the first collection of regional carols), Tatiana Găluşcă, Nichita Smochină, Gheorghe Pavelescu, Anton Rațiu and others, in the monographic research also Professor Constantin Brăiloiu had an active participation.

In the "far orient" of the Romanian people, the scientist had stepped, as himself confessed, "into a completely new and unpredicted world". In the scattered villages from the Bug river area he recorded tens of tunes and songs from the inhabitants as well as from those that temporarily moved in from Crimea and Caucasus during the World War II. This way he discovered the profound temporal persistence of some representative categories in the Romanian folklore, among whom there were several ritual wedding songs (to the bride, at the great ceremonial banquet, the road songs, various gathering songs, to the dowry dance etc.), Christmas carols (some examples being originating in the folklore from Walachia, South Moldavia and Dobrudja regions), sorrow songs, shepherd songs, dance songs and instrumental repertoire. Still, the absolute revelation of his field researches was a unique version of the pastoral ballad *Miorița*, a very rare specimen, that has been endowed with archaic traits and was recorded from the informant Ion (Vanea) Munteanu, one of not many traditional singers, instrumental (flute and bagpipe) players who got evacuated from the Caucasus area. This newly-discovered creation was an ideal example in which the maestro saw the traces of an almost lost world, a world that spoke to him with the voice of the long-gone ancestors.

As an important trait of the native repertory Brăiloiu especially notes the raised frequency of the songs and dancing tunes in an asymmetrical rhythm, a musical genre called *Oleandra,* structured by the three metrical beats and concatenated in the order short-short-long, also known as *Geamparale* in other ethnographical regions. Actually, this folk category is frequently found in the Tatar

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musical culture in Crimea too, an ethnic group with whom Romanians have interacted for many centuries. In the same time, by analyzing the consequences that corresponded to the geo-cultural particularity of this area, Brăiloiu points out the effects of an ongoing process of a profound transformation of the tradition and especially the modification of the functional status or even the disappearance of some wedding and funeral ritual songs. This phenomenon that begun as consequence of the hostile Bolshevik politics regarding the traditional, cultural and religious heritage of the national communities, policies that manifested as massive deportations, intimidations, blackmails, and ideological pressure, including forced collectivization, the destruction of churches, the suppressing of the ownership and of forms of the traditional life of the natives, is qualified by Brăiloiu through the suggestive notion "the functional change" (*dezafectare*), or – as it might be called nowadays – *acculturation.*

Unfortunately, it is hardly known what happened to the phonographic collection thoroughly realized in the Transnistrian area. Not even the content of the collection or the number of pieces and the keeping place of the materials is known yet. Still, some dispersed pieces managed to be compelled in the *Collection Universelle de Musique Populaire Enregistrée,* published in Geneva, with the support of UNESCO and with Brăiloiu's direct contribution, between 1951 and 1958. In the compartment reserved for „the Romanian speaking Ucrainians", the 1st disc of the previously mentioned collection, exclussively dedicated to the European traditional music, also includes five unique samples of musical folklore in the river Bug region, that is a lament-song (piece no.10), a bride song (piece no.7), a women's sorrow-song (piece no.6), an entertaiment song *de hulit*, as it is locally called (piece no.8), and a outlaw-song (piece no.9).

The immense gap in the ethnological documentation of the eastern Romanian people area was somehow fulfilled by the newly published special collection *Romanian folklore from the eastern part beyond the Dniester River, the Bug River and from the Northern Caucasus* [Băieşu, Graur et alii: 2007], that was put together by researchers in The Philology Institute of The Science Academy of Moldova, in Chişinău. A lot of musical materials from Transnistria, that have not yet been made public, were collected by the Ukrainian ethnomusicvlogist Klement Kvitka and by a group of Soviet researches. This materials could be found in the Archives of the Institute for Ethnography and Art Sciences of the Ukrainian Science Academy in Kiev.

The musical thesaurus gathered by Brăiloiu, including the monographic campaigns in Bessarabia and Bucovina, represents a highly important documentary and methodological basis for any future comparative and diachronical research works on the traditional music, as an integrated part of the national and European cultural heritage. The trascription of the phonogrammical found and its inclusion in the academic circuit stands as a great necessity for modern ethnomusicology.

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To sum up, I would like to mention that Constantin Brăiloiu's theoretical and methodological heritage had a primary importance in the evolution of the musical science, as well as of the specific universitary education process in the Republic of Moldova, especially during the post-Sovietic period, starting with the 1990's. It is, therefore, a chapter worthy of a future special study.

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BARTÓK'S RELATIONSHIP WITH BRĂILOIU – AN INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE

PÁL RICHTER

In his letter to his youthful love, Stephany Geyer, dated September 6, 1907, Bartók wrote: "If I should cross myself I would say: In the name of Nature, Art and Science"[1].

Bartók found the "Holy Trinity" of nature-science-and-art, so crucial to him, in folk music. Like a scientist, he collected, recorded and classified ethnomusicological data. Several times during his life he found refuge in this work and a way to recharge himself artistically. In a letter written to his wife, Márta Ziegler, during World War I, in 1915, he reported: "Even active collecting was a surrogate for something I could not take part in: an intensive musical life. Since the war, paper pushing has become a surrogate for active collecting. It cannot go on like this for long. What do I really long for? Only impossible things. To visit my dear Romanians to collect, to go far away, to travel, to listen to excellent music, but not in Budapest [...]"[2].

On the one hand Bartók's disclosure reveals that to him, despite his affinity with the natural sciences (he was known to be a keen insect and plant collector), folk music was primarily a musical experience. On the other hand, constant escapism and a desire to tame the unknown – romantic sentiments, so to say – were a major stimulant for him in collecting folk music. The latter can be supported by Kodály's insightful words: "It is true that his collections in Romanian and other languages outnumbered those in Hungarian [...] he was magnetized and fascinated by the novelty and unfamiliarity of the material. As in so many other things, in this respect he was a real *novarum rerum cupidus* as well"[3].

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[1] "One gets enthusiastic about the Holy Trinity you so beautifully wrote about in your letter. «If I should cross myself I would say: In the name of Nature, Art and Science»" (From his letter to Stephany Geyer, dated September 6, 1907). – cf. *Bartók Béla Levelei* [The Correspondence of Béla Bartók], ed. János Demény, Budapest, 1976, p. 128.

[2] From a letter to his wife, written in early 1915, without dating – cf. *Bartók Béla családi levelei* [The Family Correspondence of Béla Bartók], ed. János Demény, Budapest, 1981, pp. 235–236.

[3] Zoltán Kodály, *A folklorista Bartók* [Bartók the Folklorist] (1950), in *Visszatekintés* 2, ed. Ferenc Bónis, Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, Budapest, 1982, p. 452.

REF/JEF, *1–2*, p. 151–154, Bucureşti, 2008

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Between 1906 and the end of World War I Béla Bartók collected some 10,000 melodies on the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary. Barely a third of these was Hungarian material and the rest were mainly Romanian and Slovakian melodies. After 1919 he practically did not take part in field collecting (apart from his tour in Turkey in 1936). The political atmosphere following World War I and the administration, which hindered rather than promoted travel, made it impossible for Bartók to continue collecting in his favourite regions. From then onwards his work on folk music was limited to processing the vast material and data collected earlier, making transcripts and classifying melodies.

All his life Bartók's ambition was to make his collections accessible to the public as soon as possible. He even prepared this huge material for printing, with the exeption of a small fraction; however, only 1,500 melodies were published during his life. *Ethnographia* (a Hungarian ethnographical periodical) was the first to publish a few melodies from Bartók's 1906–1907 field collections, in its 1908 and 1909 issues entitled *Székely balladák* [Szekler Ballads] and *Dunántúli balladák* [Transdanubian Ballads]. Then, in 1918 he published Hungarian vocal material entitled *A magyar katonadalok dallamai* [Melodies of Hungarian Military Folk Songs]. His first study to contain Romanian melodies, *The Musical Dialect of the Romanian People in Hunedoara*, appeared in *Ethnographia*, in 1914. The eight melodies published in the periodical were accompanied by a short introduction to Romanian folk music and a notation guide. His idea to put the Romanian collection from Bihor County into print date back to the 1910s. Bartók offered the collection for publication to the Romanian Academy. He finished his manuscript containing 371 melodies in 1912 and was published in Bucharest in as early as 1913 under the title *Cântece poporale româneşti din Comitatul Bihor (Ungaria)*. A short accompanying study and brief notes inform the reader about the traits of the melodies[4]. Swiftly after the Bihor volume was complete Bartók began editing and preparing the Maramureş collection for publication. He sent the manuscript to the Romanian Academy in December 1913, however, due to the deteriorating political atmosphere and war conditions the volume was only published 10 years later in Munich, titled *Volksmusik der Rumänen von Maramureş*. The "Colinde" [Christmas Carolls]-Collection, financed by the Romanian Academy to be prepared for publication between 1923 and 1925, faced a similarly grim fate. Bartók negotiated with Oxford University Press for almost ten years from 1925 onwards. He first reclaimed the manuscript in 1929 and finally in 1931. In 1932 he tried to have Universal Edition in Vienna publish the volume, still expecting funds from the Romanian Academy. After lengthy procrastination the Romanians announced

[4] Later on Bartók thought his notes were inadequate and made several corrections in his own copy. Facsimile edition Béla Bartók, *Ethnomusikologische Schriften 2.* (Hrsg. D. Dille), Budapest, 1965–1968.

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they were not able to fund the project. Finally, Bartók himself paid the publication costs and had Universal Edition publish *Melodien der rumänischen Colinde* in 1935, containing a collection of 484 Christmas songs.

As attested by his letters written to Constantin Brăiloiu, Bartók intermittently worked on his Romanian collection in the early 1930s. Although the letters focus on the publication of the "Colinde" – Collection primarily, Bartók also makes references to his work on other Romanian collections[5]. He summarized his research in his study *The Folk Music of Hungary and Neighbouring Peoples* completed in January 1934,[6] and began to nurture the idea of collating a complete edition of the Romanian material he had collected. It is little wonder that Bartók's work became indispensable to researchers of Romanian music folklore. It is a well-known fact that Brăiloiu's attention was brought to Bartók's collections by his mentor Dumitru G. Kiriac, and so is the fact that Bartók's visit to Bucharest in October 1924, where he received lodging from the Brăiloius', was a pivotal step in the relationship of the two folklorist-composers or composer-folklorists.

Bartók won international renown as a composer, and Brăiloiu as a folklorist. For one of them collecting folk songs became a source or substrate of inspiration, for the other it was, first and foremost, a scientific task. During his stay in Bucharest in 1934, in the course of which he gave a lecture in French titled *The Influence of Peasant Music on Modern Music* to the Romanian Composers' Society led by Brăiloiu, Bartók had a first hand experience of the methods used in Romanian folklore research, which had been discussed in detail in Brăiloiu's 1931 paper *Outline of a Method of Musical Folklore*. Bartók thought the Romanian method of folk music research creditable and exemplary, as stated in his 1936 study *Why and How do We Collect Folk Music*[7]. It is no overstatement to say that the friendship that grew out of this professional relationship formed the basis of the intellectual information channel which has been used to the present day in Hungarian and Romanian music folklore despite historical adversities. Through Bartók, Brăiloiu made contact with Hungarian musicologists and ethnographers including Zoltán Kodály, László Lajtha, Dénes Bartha and Gábor Lükő, and the Hungarian folk music research could widely profit from the results of Romanian ethnomusicological research hallmarked by Brăiloiu. It is probably no coincidence that Romanian-Hungarian researchers Ferenc László and István Almási excell in exploring the relationship, correspondence and research methods of Bartók and Brăiloiu. This intellectual information channel promotes EU joint projects between

[5] *Bartók Béla Levelei* [The Correspondence ....], pp. 449–450)

[6] Bartók, Béla, *Népzenénk és a szomszéd népek zenéje*, in *Bartók Béla írásai* [Writings of Béla Bartók] 3, ed. Vera Lampert, Editio Musica, Budapest, 1999, pp. 210–269.

[7] Bartók, Béla, *Miért és hogyan gyűjtsünk népzenét?*, in *Bartók Béla írásai* [Writings of Béla Bartók] 3, ed. Vera Lampert, Editio Musica Budapest, 1999, pp. 275–290.

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Romanian and Hungarian researchers as well as Romanian and Hungarian folklore archives. EthnoArc (Linked European Archives for Ethnomusicological Research) is one such project, which aims at making a joint database of folk music archives accessible and retrievable through the internet. The closing session of this project will be held tomorrow, and after tomorrow, here, in Bucharest, partly in the Institute for Ethnography and Folklore bearing Brăiloiu's name and transmitting his intellectual heritage.

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THE BRĂILOIU MODEL

FERENC LÁSZLÓ

Honoured Academy, distinguished audience. Upon learning that my talk would follow Mr Pál Richter's presentation on the exemplary scientific ties between Constantin Brăiloiu and Béla Bartók, I propose to conjure a parallelism, reflected in the personalities of these two illustrious men, that goes beyond the academic.

It is common knowledge that Bartók profoundly influenced the musical oeuvre of the generations that followed him. His influence on many composers, citing Anatol Vieru, was 'irresistible,' sometimes even 'tyrannous'[1]. Bartók's impact on ethnomusicology is reflected most eloquently in the scientific achievements of Constantin Brăiloiu, the man today we are paying homage to. Bartók was exemplary in many ways, beyond his achievements as a musician and scientist. While he never assumed a role in politics or endorsed an ideology, those aware of his heritage honour his exemplary humanity and civic attitude, as his responses to the challenges of history were just as genuine and genial as his artistic and academic achievements.

The Bartók model is deeply rooted in the soil of multiethnic, pre-war Hungary, a territory in which, in those days, Hungarians accounted for less than fifty percent of the overall population. Raised in the patriotic traditions of his times, the young Bartók went through some episodes of nationalistic enthusiasm tinted with xenophobia directed against the Jews and Germans living in Hungary. However, his providential interactions with the peasantry, a community unaware of xenophobia unless inoculated by society's 'higher' echelons, managed to change his views entirely. His contacts with those ethnic communities of his country that still had a peasantry dedicated to the preservation of their oral traditions allowed Bartók to include also the non-Hungarian citizens of the country into his ardent and relentless patriotism. It is well-known how, following his incursions into some Slovak villages, Bartók soon discovered Romanian musical folklore both in Transylvania and in the Banat region. After encountering Ukrainian and Serbian lore he also investigated a tiny Catholic Bulgarian minority in the Banat.

[1] Anatol Vieru, *Marii izolaţi* [The Great Exiled], in Francisc László (ed.), *Béla Bartók şi muzica românească*. Bucureşti, Editura Muzicală, 1976, pp. 83-85.

REF/JEF, *1–2*, p. 155–158, Bucureşti, 2008

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Eventually, the final count of his collection shows more non-Hungarian songs than Hungarian ones. To Romanians and Slovaks, the most numerous minorities of pre-war Hungary, Bartók spoke in their own mother tongues. His articles, studies and books helped the Romanians and Slavs living in his homeland to better appreciate the oral culture of their villages, thus contributing to their emerging national self-awareness.

Contrary to the nationalist strategies applied by the government in Budapest, Bartók disseminated the image of a multiethnic Hungary to the world. His compositions are studded with non-Hungarian elements and the ultimate analysis of his personal musical style shows that it is equally rooted in the anhemitonic pentatony he discovered in 1907 in Hungarian music from the Székely counties, as well as in the hemitonic pentatony and the acoustic heptatony discovered in 1909 in Romanian villages in Bihor – to name but a few of the main sources of his folkloric oeuvre.

I would like to bring up two notorious occasions to further illustrate the manner in which Bartók fully identified himself with his multiethnic homeland and its musical folklore. In 1910, Bartók contributed to the *Festival Hongrois* organised in Paris, playing his well-known *Dans românesc* [Romanian Dance]. In 1917, in full development of the WWI, when the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of War initiated a music festival meant to praise the military virtues of the great dual force (that was to fall apart soon after), Bartók participated playing Hungarian and Slovak pieces along with the orchestrated version of the six *Jocuri populare româneşti* [Romanian Folk Dances], especially commissioned for this propagandistic tour de force.

Another eloquent proof of the deep ties with his multiethnic homeland can be found in the fact that following WWI, when Hungary lost most of its non-Hungarian subjects, Bartók stopped doing fieldwork; as history frustrated him of the opportunity to engage with the oral lore of the Romanians, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Serbs and Bulgarians of Greater Hungary, he ostensibly gave up collecting music in the 'truly' Hungarian villages of post-war Hungary as well.

The ultimate analysis of Bartók's oeuvre, that is the deeply human and profoundly European touch of the Bartók model, proves his total openness and availability to all national and cultural minorities of his homeland. According to this model, tolerance towards the national minorities is no longer the supreme ideal; it must be replaced by a pro-active interest and a creative attitude towards the cultural heritage of all those minorities with which, by fate, one shares the living space.

Brăiloiu was first inspired to engage with folklore by Dimitrie Georgescu Kiriac; Bartók, however, gave him the decisive impulse into this direction in October 1924, on the occasion of a concert performed together with George Enescu in Bucharest, when he enjoyed Brăiloiu's generous hospitality whilst staying in his flat in Brutarilor (Bakers') Street. Thus, feeding himself on Bartók's model of an

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achieved folklorist, reaping the benefits of his intense collaboration with Dimitrie Gusti's school of sociology, Brăiloiu became the founder of Romanian ethnomusicology, evolving then into a flagship figure of the global ethnomusicology. Many words have been said and will be said in the future about Brăiloiu's scientific career. The present address only proposes to sketch some aspects of the deep humanity and exemplary civic nature of the Brăiloiu model.

With a fate distinctively different from Bartók's, who was the son of an impoverished provincial family, and who lost his father at the tender age of eight, Brăiloiu was an aristocrat of noble descent, whose family had given to the country numerous politicians, military leaders, diplomats, and scientists. Related by blood to many influential families in the Old Kingdom,[2] he benefited of a select upbringing and education, being raised in elite schools in Austria, France and Switzerland. After completing his education, Brăiloiu returned to his homeland as a gleaming intellectual and musician of a truly European format. He mastered German and French with the same flawless elegance as his native Romanian, both in speech and in writing. Whilst Bartók felt truly rooted in the multiethnic rural world of his homeland, Brăiloiu naturally identified himself with Western cultures and civilizations. He stayed faithful to his Western network of contacts even after returning home in 1919, following the most noble traditions of Romanian aristocrats who where at ease with being cosmopolitans as well as fervent patriots.

Founding the Society of Romanian Composers in 1920 was Brăiloiu's first act in the service of the greater, national good. Whilst chaired by Enescu, who faithfully served the Society by bringing in his national and international prestige, Brăiloiu practically led and moulded it as its secretary and head ideologist until definitively leaving the country in 1943. In 1925, he founded an award meant to stimulate the collection of folklore material. He thus laid the cornerstone of what was to become in 1928 the Folklore Archives, the precursor to the institution that currently bears his name. Both these institutions served the scope of their foundation in an exemplary manner by stimulating, enriching and concentrating the national creative potential, whilst connecting it to European and global artistic and scientific currents. As his ties with Romanian peasant spirituality deepened, he spectacularly increased his educational activities, founding an authentic school of Romanian folklore research whose disciples are personalities like Ilarion Cocişiu, Tiberiu Alexandru, Harry Brauner, Emilia Comişel, Paula Carp and others. Brăiloiu faithfully kept in touch with his disciples even after leaving Romania for good, during the last years of his life (1953–1958), when he carefully followed their careers from as far as Geneva and Paris. By this time, Brăiloiu was an undisputed luminary of his discipline.

For several decades, Brăiloiu was Romania's most notable representative on the scene of world musicology. He was the valued Romanian contributor to

[2] Reference is made to the Kingdom of Romania within its pre-WW I borders.

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A. Eaglefield-Hull's new musical lexicon, a most impressive compilation *cum manifesto* meant to reconnect musicians who had been estranged during WWI[3]. Standing on opponent fronts, they had ceased communicating with each other. In 1943, during a raging WWII, the initiative was taken in Budapest to pay homage to the then sextuagenarian Kodály by publishing an anthology of studies signed by leading international musicologists and ethnomusicologists, irrespective of their citizenship that might have identified them as belonging to one or the other nation at war[4]. Along notable scholars in the field from Amsterdam, Ankara, Basel, Berlin, Budapest, Copenhagen, Glasgow, Helsinki, Paris, Rome, Sofia, Stockholm, Tokyo, Warsaw and Zagreb, it was Brăiloiu who was invited to represent Romania in this pantheon. This musicological enterprise reminds me of a sarcastic remark commonly attributed to Bertolt Brecht, saying: "Stell Dir vor, es ist Krieg und keiner geht hin" – "Imagine there is war and no one goes there". To further illustrate Brăiloiu's intellectual generosity, that was not limited to fraternising with the 'great' Western cultures, I would like to mention the perseverance with which, in the thirties, he encouraged and supported the collection of Csángó folklore by the emerging young Hungarian folklorists Sándor Veress (1930), Gábor Lükő (1931–33) and Péter Balla (1933–34), at a time when diplomatic ties between Romania and Hungary were fraught with tension[5].

The conclusion to this parallelism emerges by itself. On the one hand, the academic achievements of those two giants of folklore and ethnomusicology, although very different, are converging and complementing each other. On the other hand, the Bartók model of patriotism, opposed to the local, bellicose nationalisms, and the Brăiloiu model of cosmopolitan patriotism, which looks at the national through the lens of a rich international experience, are, they too, complementary. When talking of the Bartók model, one should also evoke the Brăiloiu model, and vice-versa. Viewed from the perspective of the decades past since their physical disappearance, they seem to embody together a complex general-humanistic ideal, which has preserved its acute relevance to this day.

[3] A. Eaglefield-Hull, *Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, London, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1924. Serving as a symbol for this new found cross-border solidarity, a German version of the book was soon published. See Alfred Einstein (ed.), *Das neue Musiklexikon*, Berlin, Max Hesse, 1926.

[4] Béla Gunda (ed.), *Emlékkönyv Kodály Zoltán hatvanadik születésnapjára* [Memorial volume published on the occasion of Zoltán Kodály's sixtieth birthday], Budapest, Magyar Néprajzi Társaság, 1943.

[5] Emilia Comişel–Francisc László, *Constantin Brăiloiu, partizan al etnomuzicologiei fără frontiere* [Constantin Brăiloiu, Partisan of an Ethnomusicology without Frontiers], Cluj, Eikon, 2006, pp. 19–43.

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***, *Ethnologie roumaine*, vol. I, *Folkloristique et ethnomusicologie*, vol. II, 1re partie, *Méthodologie. Archives. Instruments de travail*, coordonnateurs Sabina Ispas, Nicoleta Coatu et collectif de rédacteurs, Edition de l'Académie Roumaine, Bucarest, 2006, 386 p.; 2007, 357 p. (L'Académie Roumaine, L'Institut d'Ethnographie et de Folklore „Constantin Brăiloiu")

Le passage dans un nouveau siècle a toujours présumé le dépassement d'une frontière psychologique, action qui nécessite des préparations, des rétrospections, des conclusions, la projection des nouveaux plans. Lorsque le siècle arrive avec des événements marquants, avec des découvertes révolutionnaires, son image se compacte et le temps historique devient fort quelquefois et d'autres fois égale. Le premier siècle d' après Jésus apporte ainsi le commencement du christianisme, et, plus tard, on a un siècle des Lumières, un de l'histoire ou des nations, l'autre de la vitesse etc. La période des dernières années est singularisée par un double passage : dans un nouveau siècle et dans le troisième millénaire.

Cette étape, accompagnée elle aussi par des analyses, par des restructurations et par des modernisations, impose aux disciplines ethnologiques une redéfinition conceptuelle, nécessaire dans le cas particulier de la Roumanie – comme les coordonateurs du volume le disent – aussi à cause de l'histoire récente, commune à l'espace est-européen (les pays ex-communistes). Le tracement des frontières permissives, mais claires, du domaine, son reconnaissance et son démystification, son (re)positionnement auprès des besoins contemporains sont autant d'exigences auto imposées.

L'argument, qui ouvre la série des études intégrées dans les deux volumes, montre la nécessité de redéfinir les objets d'étude des domaines de la folkloristique et de l'ethnomusicologie, tel comme la spécification ferme de ses intérêts, adaptés à la période actuelle. Avec un fort réseau d'institutions dans le domaine, mais aussi avec un handicap créé par l'idéologie et par la censure de la deuxième moitié du dernier siècle, les sciences ethnologiques roumaines ont le devoir d'actualiser les significations des documents privés, jusqu'à l'année 1990, de la liberté de « parler », et les institutions spécialisées doivent former des nouveaux spécialistes.

Cela est le cadre dans lequel les coordonateurs de la série ont senti l'importance d'un traité d'ethnologie, en comblant un ancien désir des chercheurs de l'Institut. Limités aux domaines de la folkloristique et de l'ethnomusicologie, mais sans préciser le raisonnement de ce choix, les volumes vont contenir de synthèses spécifiques, d'ordre théorique et méthodologique, avec représentativité pour les sciences mentionnées, pratiquées en Roumanie.

Outre les volumes publiés, la série va inclure les prochains ouvrages : II, la 2éme partie. *Méthodes et instruments de recherche* ; III. *Les catégories rituel-cérémoniales du cycle familial. Expressions littéraires et musicales – La naissance et l'enfance* ; IV. *Les catégories rituel-cérémoniales du cycle familial. Expressions littéraires et musicales – Le mariage (prénuptial, nuptial, postnuptial)* ; V. *Les catégories rituel-cérémoniales du cycle familial. Expressions littéraires et musicales – Le complexe rituel-cérémonial mortuaire. La mort et l'enterrement, commémorations* ; VI. *Catégories rituel-cérémoniales du cycle calendrier. Expressions littéraires et musicales* ; VII. *Institutions, organisations, associations culturelles* ; VIII. *Périodiques*.

Précédé par *l'Argument* signé par Sabina Ispas et Nicoleta Coatu, et par un encadrement dans le contexte historique européen (Radu Toader), le premier volume, issu en 2006, est divisé en trois sections. Il commence avec des indications d'ordre terminologique, en expliquant des termes comme *antropos*, *valeur*, *logos* etc., et les concepts opérationnels : *culture*, *civilisation*, *identité culturale*, *tradition*, *culture populaire*, *folklore*. Ensuite, sont présentées les disciplines ethnologiques (folkloristique, ethnomusicologie, ethnographie), avec une tradition scientifique de plus d'un siècle et demie, et la dernière section du volume contient un historique du développement de ces disciplines dans l'espace roumain. L'œuvre finit par une ample bibliographie des ouvrages cités. Le volume dont nous avons parlé a reçu le prix Simion Florea Marian de l'Académie Roumaine, pour l'année 2006.

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Le deuxième volume de la série, avec une structure plus ramifiée, est divisé dans les chapitres suivants : *La méthodologie de la recherche concrète*, *Des repères historiques*, *Les Archives de folklore*, *Les instruments de travail*. Dans le premier chapitre, on analyse diachroniquement la méthodologie de recueillir : le profil du chercheur qui va dans le terrain, le critère de l'authenticité du texte, qui peut être ou non respecté, les techniques de recueillir etc. Puis, on suit l'évolution de la méthodologie de recueillir le folklore musical, des premières manifestations de l'intérêt pour le folklore jusqu'à la première moitié du dernier siècle. La recherche de terrain est abordée aussi synchroniquement, dans la dernière partie de la section, où on suit les étapes d'une enquête de terrain et les méthodes de recueillir.

Après la mise en contexte historique du commencement de la folkloristique roumaine et après une analyse du développement des archives de folklore, institutions spécialisées en thésaurisation, systématisation, actualisation, conservation et valorisation du patrimoine immatériel (dès la naissance du besoin de thésauriser les matériaux recueillis jusqu'à la période contemporaine), on suit une section spécialisée, qui va intéresser les ethnomusicologues et les ethnochoreologues par la présentation des différents types de notation musicale et chorégraphique, mais aussi par des informations sur la transcription phonétique.

La dernière section du volume, *Les instruments de travail*, s'occupe de la bibliographie, en tant que les dictionnaires, les anthologies de textes (musicales, lyriques, épiques en verses, épiques en prose, les jeux des enfants). Les monographies, les éditions critiques et les typologies seront analysées dans la deuxième partie du volume, qui se trouve en cours d'apparition. Le volume a aussi une annexe, avec des documents de l'archive de L'institut d'Ethnographie et de Folklore, quelques illustrations et une bibliographie.

Les auteurs de la série proposent une synthèse des perspectives théoriques appliquées par les spécialistes roumains dans le domaine des disciplines ethnologiques, dès la deuxième partie du XIXème siècle, jusqu'à la fin du siècle passé.

Monica-Beatrice BERCOVICI

*** Academia Română. Institutul de Etnografie şi Folclor „C. Brăiloiu". *Atlasul etnografic român*. Coordonator: dr. Ion Ghinoiu. Vol. 2. *Ocupaţiile*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 2005, 295 p., inclusiv 128 hărţi colorate şi 125 tabele. [*The Romanian Ethnographic Atlas*, vol. II, *The Occupations*. Dr. Ion Ghinoiu coord., Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House.]

In a time when the general (political, scientific, public) attention is focused on the globalization process, the *Romanian Ethnographic Atlas*, published by "Constantin Brăiloiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore of the Romanian Academy, emphasizes – as to redressing a fundamental balance – the importance of the particular local features in the contemporary life of the peoples. *Hic et nunc* at stake is the way of living specific to Romanian people. This monumental work, designed in five volumes (I. Habitation, II. Occupations, III. The Folk Technique, IV. The Folk Art, V. Customs & Mythology), is going to cover impressive ethnographic data, therefore being instrumental to the knowledge and setting in historical time, now and forever, of the whole system of values legitimizing Romanians' national identity.

As the subject of our comments is the volume II, we will not discuss details regarding the methodology of the whole work, which was presented by the coordinator of the project, Dr. Ion Ghinoiu, at the beginning of the first volume (published in 2003). Let us mention, however, that, in different forms (mainly as ethno-linguistic or ethnographic atlases), the idea of this kind of works

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appeared in Europe of the XIX century, namely, not accidentally, in an era known in history as "the century of the nationalities". The need of the peoples to proclaim their own identity by asserting their traditional culture led to a new science, *ethnography*. In the same time, especially by the contributions of great German scholars (Carl Ritter, Alexander von Humboldt, Friedrich Ratzel, Adolf Bastian) whose activity extended along the entire century, geography is materialized as a modern science that would reveal to the scientific investigation the basic method of the atlases – cartography. Therefore the ethnographical atlases appeared at the crossroad of these two sciences: ethnography and geography (Ratzel and Bastian are obviously connected with the history of ethnography as well).

As Ion Ghinoiu wrote in the preface (and not only) of the first volume, in Romania the forerunners of the idea of ethnographic atlas were George Vâlsan, Dumitru Caracostea, Traian Herseni, and especially Romulus Vuia. Ion Conea, who put forward the idea of a toponymical atlas, must be added to these outstanding figures, but Simion Mehedinţi, too, maybe even before the others; not only he was the teacher of some of those already named but he showed most efficiently at the academic level the symbiosis between geography and ethnography; Mehedinţi theorized the mapping of ethnographical data and conducted field researches regarding the spreading of these data in cultural areas. Finally, letting aside the well known linguistic atlases while keeping the reference to the works of the general category of atlases, we mention the publishing in the last years of four volumes of the anthropological atlas of Romania, under the aegis of the Institute of Anthropology: Muntenia / Wallachia (in 1999), East Banat (2004), Maramureş (2004), and Transylvania (2005); they are atlases of physical (biological) anthropology, but they are complementary to the ethnographical ones.

There was a long and agitated odyssey behind this cardinal synthetic work until it was accomplished. The systematic field investigations for the atlas started at the beginning of '70; nevertheless, the history of the atlas overlaps to a large extent over the very one of the Institute, crowning the efforts (not exempted, to our knowledge, from some tensioned moments) of more series of researchers. Among the previous coordinators of this project the names of Romulus Vulcănescu, Ion Vlăduţiu, Paul Petrescu, and Ion Ghinoiu should be evoked – the latter one deserving more credit on the account of the final accomplishment, finishing, and publishing the whole work.

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In the second volume of the ethnographical atlas we are taken into the very life of the peasant. The topic of this volume is constituted by the main occupations of Romanians. They are described in four chapters, one for agriculture (the tillage, but also the viticulture, fruit growing, gardening, gathering are included in this category), one for the animal breeding, then a chapter for bee keeping, sericulture, fishing and hunting, the last chapter being the transport and the trade. Some statistic data show the impressive effort of the field research: the data were recorded in 536 villages, 1,200 questions were asked in every one, and 18,000 subjects answered. Sometimes the data reach to small details such as the material used to making the vessels and vehicles to transport the grapes (pp. 142–143) or the types of traps for hunting (pp. 258–259). Therefore the work goes far beyond the general knowledge of this topic and answers all the main questions regarding the ways of obtaining the food.

The making use of the atlas is facilitated having in view that every chapter of the atlas is well defined and structured, and is accompanied by an introduction which includes not only the main aspects of the topic, but some details unmapped as well, which reveals the historical dimension of the presented reality. Also, a table with suggestive photographs from the archives of the Institute is attached to every map, and this enhances the attraction and the value of this work. There are many interesting photographs such as: the weeding with the beat axe in Gorj county, the sheep-fold „boiling" in Brăila county, primitive hives in Mehedinţi county, floating bridge on Someş river, tilling with buffaloes in Braşov county, wooden plough in Alba county, skinning the fox in Satu Mare county etc.

The first chapter of the work deals with the information about the tillage: plants – cereals, textile, oil-bearing, industrial, forage; tools and techniques used for obtaining agricultural land; tillage techniques and proceedings, the time when they are done. The activities specific to the tillage – such

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as tilling, sowing, harvesting, etc. – were associated with certain holidays when people invoked the help of different saints, deities or forces of nature; sometimes the magic was practiced in order to have rich soil, good crops, and healthy animals. The peasants devised an agricultural calendar, including beliefs, ceremonies such as *Paparuda* (goddess of the rain), the *Caloian* (for bringing or stopping the rain), *Tânjaua* of the river Mara (to celebrate the first to plough in the spring) and so on. All the occupations presented in this volume served as rich sources for the poetic and musical inspiration, most impressive in this respect being *Miorița / The Ewing Lamb*, a pastoral poem reflecting Romanians' cosmic worldview.

The second chapter – one of the most complex – is dedicated to the animal breeding. First the animals bred within the household are presented (cows, sheep, goats, pigs, horses), then the description passes gradually to such details as the breeding places during the seasons, the functions and the names of the sheepfold and its implements, ending with presenting the activities and the tools used in the sheepfold. One learns about a lot of data regarding: the implement where the cheese is made, the functions and the names of the different vessels and pots, the functions and the names of each of the persons working at a sheepfold or of those who are in charge of the herds. By studying carefully the maps of terms, one could remark on the one hand the geographic unity of the Romanian traditional culture, and on the other hand the richness of the terminology, showing the exceptional resources of inventiveness of the Romanian language. For example, one term used for the manager of the sheepfold appears also – with the same semantics – in Moldavian area (in east), in Romanați plain (in south), in the middle of Transylvania, and even in eastern Carpathian Mountains; on the other hand, there are five or more terms naming a single tool or activity (i.e., deforesting). The existence of many synonyms also shows the amplitude and intensity of these activities in the life of the village, the importance of the social design they created.

From the third chapter ("Bee Keeping. Sericulture. Fishing. Hunting") some maps are relevant in so far as they present the involvement of different social categories of people in the reality of the villages. The map from the p. 233, e.g., shows the types of silkworms (white, yellow, striped, rose, green, grey-purple), the techniques to "resurrect" (i.e. to incubate) their eggs (near the oven, by the hutching hen, in the sun, into one's bosom, in wool or tow, in fur cap), the place of caring the silkworms (on the tables, beds, shelves, wattles), the type of leaves to feeding them (mulberry's, oak's, maple's, lettuce, dandelion, sow thistle, nettle). The most expressive photographs were chosen to illustrate the purpose of this activity: row silk, technical device of getting it, and the piece of dress that crowns the woman's costume in some Romanian areas, *"marama"* (the head-kerchief). Sericulture was practiced especially in Moldavia, Dobrudja, Wallachia, Oltenia, and in few villages from Banat. No less than 86 of medicinal plants are mentioned in the map of the p. 157 they being included in the empirical methods of healing (the so-called „old woman's medicine"). In spite of the lack of access to modern medicine, the peasants found and sometimes still find in nature the means of healing, showing a great capacity to adapt themselves to the environment. The same ability is revealed by the ways of transportation the weights: carried by man (by dragging, gliding, pulling, pushing), by animals, or using water transport (p. 277).

Special maps show the time when the activities are performed: the tilling (in the spring, summer, or autumn), the historical periods when the iron plough appeared, by regions (in the Romanian Plain, Dobrudja, and some Moldavian areas this happened in the last decades of the XIX century, in Transylvania, Banat, and Crișana mainly after 1920); in the fourth chapter a map shows the chief periodical opportunities for trading: the first of March (the beginning of the spring), March 25 (the Annunciation), the first of May (May Day), July 20 (Saint Elijah), August 6 (the Transfiguration), September 14 (the Day of the Cross etc).

This volume of *Atlas* ends with an interesting map (p. 295) presenting an intense and diversified activity: the barter; the question is: which products are offered and which required. The barter was practiced with dependence upon the needs of the peasants and the area they lived in: the people of the plains (especially those of the Romanian Plain) mainly offered grains in change for animals, handcraft wares, subsoil product, vegetables, fruits (from the inhabitants of the Getic Plateau and the Sub-Carpathian Curvature).

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Having more than 700 maps the present work does confirm the key term of "atlas" in the title. The foreigners have no difficulty to use the information, too, because the text and the legends are translated in three languages: English, French, and German.

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Such a great work makes critique almost an impiety. Nevertheless, from the sourdine of a cordial critique, we allow ourselves two observations.

The first observation regards the numbering of the maps and the photographs. Of course, they can be easily identified by agency of the page number; but while the maps are in order, page after page, more illustrations appear on the same page and this could make things a little more complicated if quoting is necessary. The second observation is more sensitive, but there are in this case attenuating circumstances. We have in view the absence in *Atlas* of any data regarding those Romanians who – at least for the time being and due to the "terror of history" (to quote Mircea Eliade) – remained outside Romania's borders. Certainly, at the moment when this work was planned and especially when the fieldwork was carried out – the simple mentioning of these Romanians was a political taboo. Nevertheless, the history is marked not only by moments of "terror", but equally by "astral hours", too (Stefan Zweig). Hoping in such a providential hour for all Romanians maybe the authors of the *Romanian Ethnographic Atlas* will think of an additional volume in which the ethnography of the Romanians from Bessarabia, Bukowina, Hungary, and the Balkan Peninsula will be presented. No matter how big the difficulties (financial, political), this aim should not be given up even if left to a future generation of researchers.

As a whole, *The Romanian Ethnographic Atlas* sets on the firmament of the endless time the values of the traditional Romanian civilization, which the art critic Giulio Carlo Argan considered as the richest peasant civilization of Europe. That is why any contribution – smaller or bigger – to this *opus magnum* grants the author the right to say to him-/herself, testamentary: "I have not lived in vain!"

Gheorghiță GEANĂ, Raluca Nicoleta PREDA

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Laurent AUBERT – docteur en anthropologie, conservateur au Musée d'ethnographie de Genève et directeur des Ateliers d'ethnomusicologie, un institut dédié à la diffusion des musiques du monde qu'il a fondé en 1983. Parallèlement à des recherches de terrain, notamment en Inde, il travaille aussi sur des questions liées aux pratiques musicales en migration. Secrétaire général des Archives internationales de musique populaire (AIMP, créées par Constantin Brăiloiu) dont il dirige la collection de CDs, il est aussi le fondateur des *Cahiers d'ethnomusicologie* (anciennement *Cahiers de musiques traditionnelles*, dès 1988) et l'auteur de nombreux articles et CDs, ainsi que de plusieurs livres, parmi lesquels *La musique de l'autre* (2001), *Les feux de la déesse* (2004) et *Musiques migrantes* (2005).

Monica-Beatrice BERCOVICI – junior researcher with the "C. Brăiloiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore (Bucharest), specializing in literary folklore and ethnic imagology.

Vasile CHISELIȚĂ – Ph.D. in musicology, senior researcher with the Cultural Heritage Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Moldova in Chisinau. He coordinates a common research project of Moldovan Academy of Sciences and Romanian Academy, that focuses on modern processes of transformations in the immaterial cultural heritage. Interest topics: East-West cultural features in traditional musics; intercultural relationships; musical multiculturalism in Eastern Europe; instrumental dance music; folk organology; history of culture. E-mail: chisvas@yahoo.com

Octavian Lazăr COSMA – Current president of the UCMR (national association of professional composers and musicologists in Romania), professor at the University of Music (Bucharest), he graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory of Music in the 1950s, and to a large extend led the destiny of music, musicology and composition in Romania over many decades. He specialized in the history of Romanian music, publishing many monographs on historiographical topics.

Marius Mircea CRIȘAN – PhD, Senior lecturer at Teacher Training Department, West University of Timişoara, Romania. He obtained his PhD from The University of Turin, Italy, with a thesis on Stoker's sources on Transylvania. He has published on reception theories and imagology.

Gheorghiță GEANĂ – PhD, Senior Researcher at the "Francisc I. Rainer" Institute of Anthropology of the Romanian Academy, and Professor of Anthropology at the University of Bucharest (Faculties of Sociology and Philosophy). He is a member of the European Association of Social

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Anthropologists (EASA), Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (ASEN – next to the London School of Economics), Overseas Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) of Great Britain and Ireland. Approached topics: history of anthropology, rituals, values, epistemology of human sciences, etc. Author of *Antropologia culturală. Un profil epistemologic* [Cultural Anthropology. An Epistemological Profile] (2005); also contributed to several books and journals printed by Romanian and international publishing houses (among the latter, Routledge, Cambridge University Press, Wiley, Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft, etc.).

Harun GÜNGÖR – Professeur à l'Université Erciyes (Kayseri, Turquie), Faculté de Philosophie et Sciences des Religions, Département de l'Histoire des Religions et directeur du Centre des Recherches sur le Monde Turcophone. E-mail: gharun@erciyes.edu.tr / gharun@gmail.com.

Sabina ISPAS – Professor, correspondent member of the Romanian Academy, and director of the "Constantin Brăiloiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore; president of the national commission for the Protection of the Immaterial Heritage; ISFNR and KFV member. Topics of interest: the study of folk stories, epic song, lyrical literature, indexing and classification systems for literary texts.

Ferenc LÁSZLÓ – Born in 1937, Professor László is Doctor of Musicology (2001) and teaches chamber music, organology, and musicology at the same "Gh. Dima" Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca where he graduated from in 1959. Known mostly as researcher on Béla Bartók's life and works (12 published volumes in 1971–2006, in Hungarian and/or Romanian, and many essays translated into English, German, and Japanese), he also devoted volumes on Bach, Liszt, Kodály, and Enescu. In 1991 he founded the Mozart Romanian Society and the Mozart Festival in Cluj-Napoca. In parallel with his pedagogical and musicological activity, he also acted as a journalist.

Marian LUPAŞCU – Born in 1957, BA and PhD of the National University of Music in Bucharest, with experience in teaching work, folklore musical training, fieldwork, and editorial work, Marian Lupascu is ethnomusicologist at the "Constantin Brailoiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore of the Romanian Academy. Since 1977 studies the Romanian, Aromanian and Gipsy musical oral tradition, both inside and outside the current borders of Romania. His research is focused on the rural folk music and urban contemporary popular music (rites and ceremonials, genres, repertoires, instruments, bands, performers), and the area of theoretical interests includes topics of methodology and also of musical structure (rhythm, pitch, architectonic systems) and transcription. Since 1995 he elaborated sets of criteria, techniques, methodologies and professional tools for sound digitization and computer assisted restoration of historical audio documents (recordings on Edison cylinders, Shellac discs, and tapes). The results were published in studies, articles, and in a number of different CDs and CD ROMs which include recordings, pictures, movies and other documents from the IEF archives.

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Raluca NICOLAE – MA in Philosophy of Culture at Bucharest University, Ph.D at "Constantin Brăiloiu" Institute of Ethnography and Folklore with the thesis *Day-time and Night-time in the Legends of Both Romanian and Japanese People*. Junior lecturer at „Spiru Haret" University (Japanese language). Two scholarships to Japan (1994–1995, 2000). Translated several Japanese short stories and a book (*Fire Stone*), co-authored a *Romanian-Japanese Conversation Guidebook* and published a *Japanese Character Dictionary – Jōyō Kanji* (2004) and *Introduction to Kana Writing* (2005).

Anna PLOTNIKOVA – Senior researcher with the Institute for Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Science (Moscow). She published over 350 articles in academic journals, books and dictionaries, and three monographs in Russian: *Materials for Ethnolinguistic Investigation of the Balkan-Slavic Area* (1996), *Dictionary of Folk Culture: Issues on Slavic Lexicography* (2000), *Ethnolinguistic Geography of South Slavia* (doctoral thesis, Moscow, 2005).

Raluca-Nicoleta PREDA – graduated from the Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance (University of Bucharest), MA in Anthropology and Social Development.

Adina RĂDULESCU – Ph.D, Master Studies and Doctoral Program in *Romanian Ethnology and Folklore* (with the published thesis, *Protection Rites in the Romanian Funerary Customs*). Lecturer in Teaching Legal English within Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, and third-year psychology student. Fields of research and interest: Funerary rites and customs, anthropology of death, Romanian ethnomedicine, identity marks in European cultural traditions, Jungian psychotherapy.

Pál RICHTER – Head of the Folk Music Archives of the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Budapest). Born in 1963, graduated from the Liszt Ferenc University of Music as a musicologist, and obtained a PhD degree in 2004. He also leads the new folk music training at Liszt Ferenc University of Music. Special field of research: 17th century music in Hungary, and especially of the Franciscans, Hungarian folk music, classical and 19th century music theory, and multimedia in music education. Since 1990 he has been involved in the computerized cataloguing of the folk music collection of the Institute for Musicology and has participated in ethnographic field research, too.

Marius SALA – Vice-president of the Romanian Academy, and corresponding member of the Real Academia Española, Instituto Mexicano de Cultura, Academia Nacional de Latras (Uruguai), Academia Peruana de la Lengua. Doctor Honoris Causa of several Universities in Romania. General director of the "Iorgu Iordan-Alexandru Rosetti" Institute for Linguistics of the Romanian Academy (Bucharest), and member in the editorial or organizing committees of many academic periodicals, publications, and international congresses. Author of many books and articles published in Romania and many other countries.

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Matei STÎRCEA-CRĂCIUN – PhD in history and anthropology, a Fulbright scholar, an AICA member, is Scientific Secretary with the "Francisc Rainer" Institute of Anthropology of the Romanian Academy. His published work includes symbolic anthropology approaches to modern and contemporary abstract art.

Galina Borisovna SYCHENKO – PhD, head of the Archive for Traditional Music and Associate Professor in the Ethnomusicological Department and of the "Glinka" State Conservatoire in Novosibirsk (Russia). Main spheres of interests – musical and ritual traditions in Southern Siberia, Mongolia, and Nepal. Has experience in organizing expeditions, conferences, research projects. Editor of proceedings of the international symposium *Music and Ritual: Structure, Semantics, Specificity* (Novosibirsk, 2004). Co-author of the series "Folklore Monuments of Peoples in Siberia and the Far East".

Sławomira ŻERAŃSKA-KOMINEK – Ph.D. in musicology (University of Warsaw, 1976). She received Independent Researcher Degree in ethnomusicology in 1986, and full professor degree in 1996. She now serves as the director of Institute of Musicology (University of Warsaw), and as the head of the Systematic Musicology Department in the Institute of Musicology (University of Warsaw). She has conducted extensive field work (1989–1999) in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) and in Poland (1985, 2000). Her interests include theory of analysis of traditional music; mythology and religion in relation to music, musical culture of ethnic minorities in Poland. Her current research explores music in the medieval gardens of love. Żerańska-Kominek's publications include books and articles on Arab theory of music, music culture of Lithuanian minority in Poland, Central Asian music (Uzbek, Turkmen), and theoretical issues in ethnomusicology. Among her major publications are: *Symbols of Time and Space in Central Asian Music* (1987, in Polish); *The Classification of Repertoire in Turkmen Traditional Music* (Journal of the Society for Asian Music 1991, vol. XXI-2); *Music in Culture. Introduction to Ethnomusicology* (1995); *André Guillaume Villoteau and the "literacy paradigm" in ethnomusicology* (Musica Antiqua Europae Orientalis X vol 1, 1997); *The Concept of Journey (Yol) in Turkmen Music Tradition* (Ethnomusicology 1998, vol. 42 no 2); (With Arnold Lebeuf) *Crazy Harman. The concept of music and musician in the Türkmen Epic Tale* (Harman Däli. Dialog: Warsaw 1998) *The Orpheus myth. Inspirations and Reinterpretations in European Artistic Tradition* (in Polish. Słowo/Obraz/Terytoria: Gdańsk 2003); *Music in the Iconography of Venus' Children* (in print); *Music in Der Minne Regel of Eberhardus Cersne aus Minden (1404)* (under print).

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